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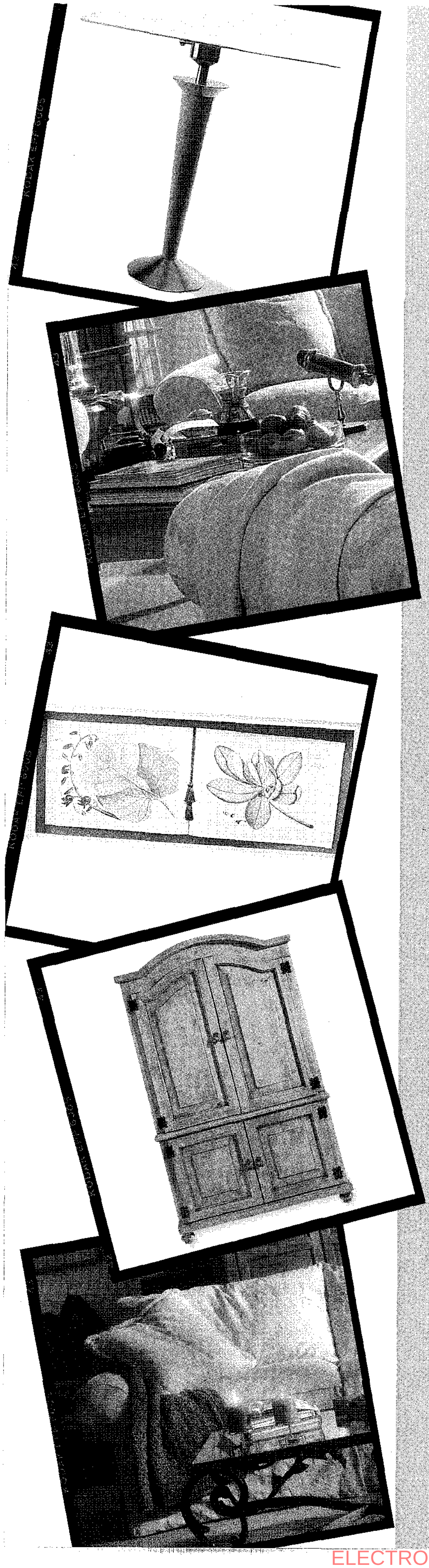
By Rene Chun



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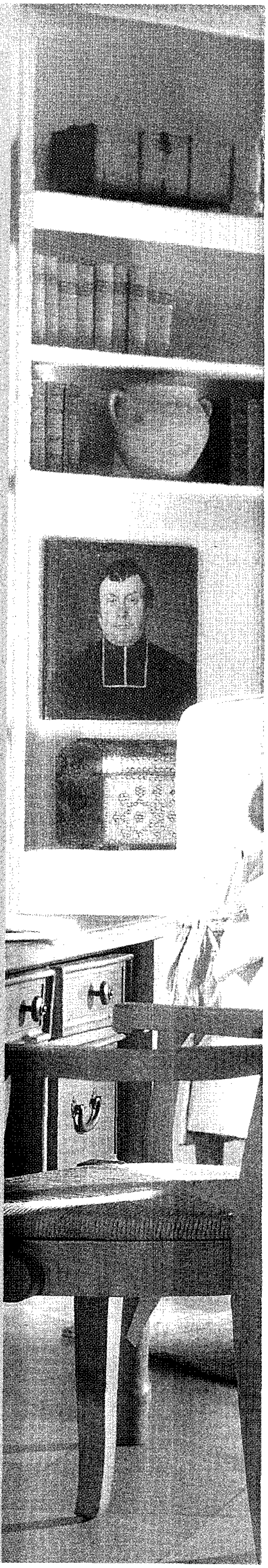

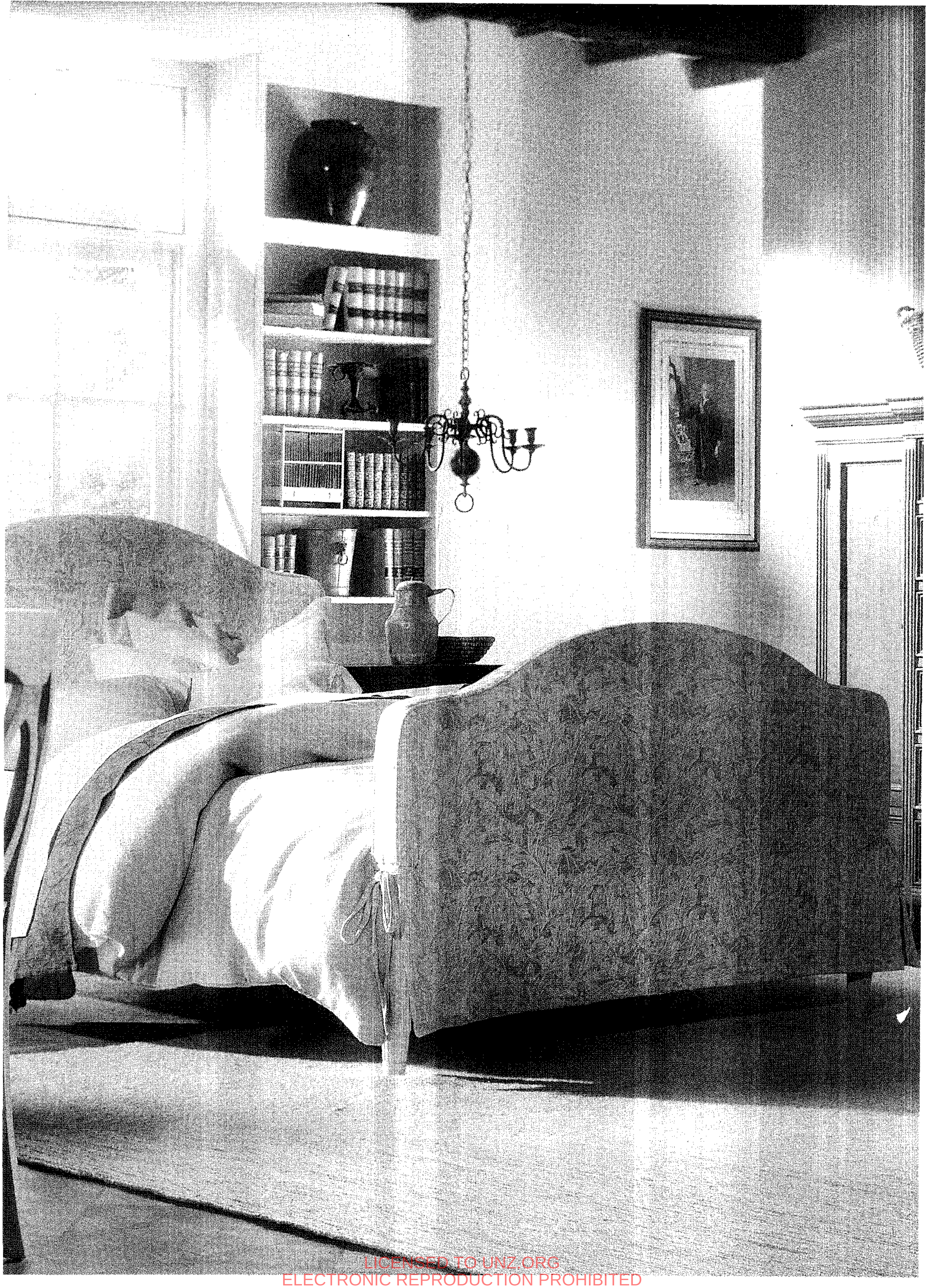

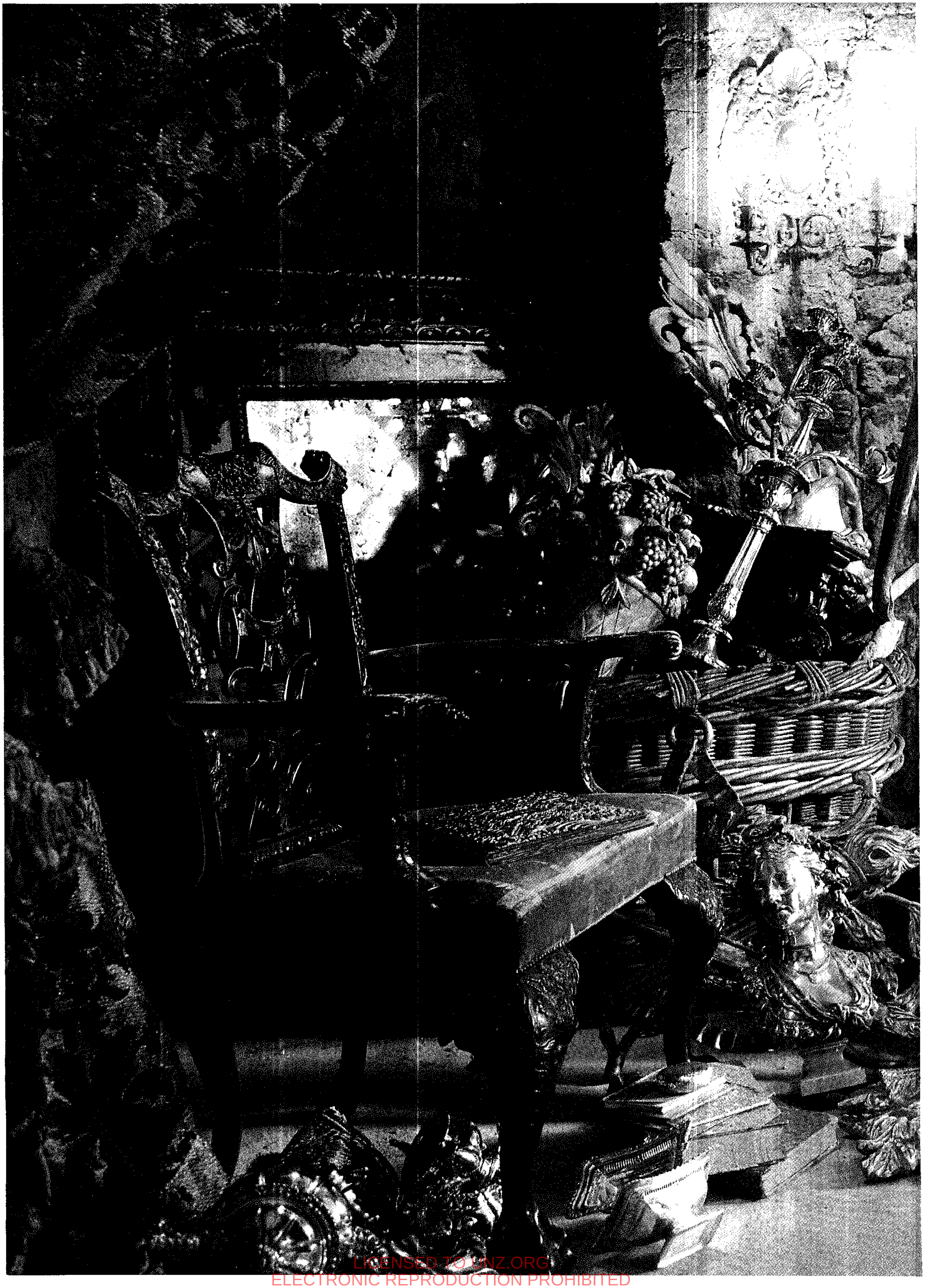

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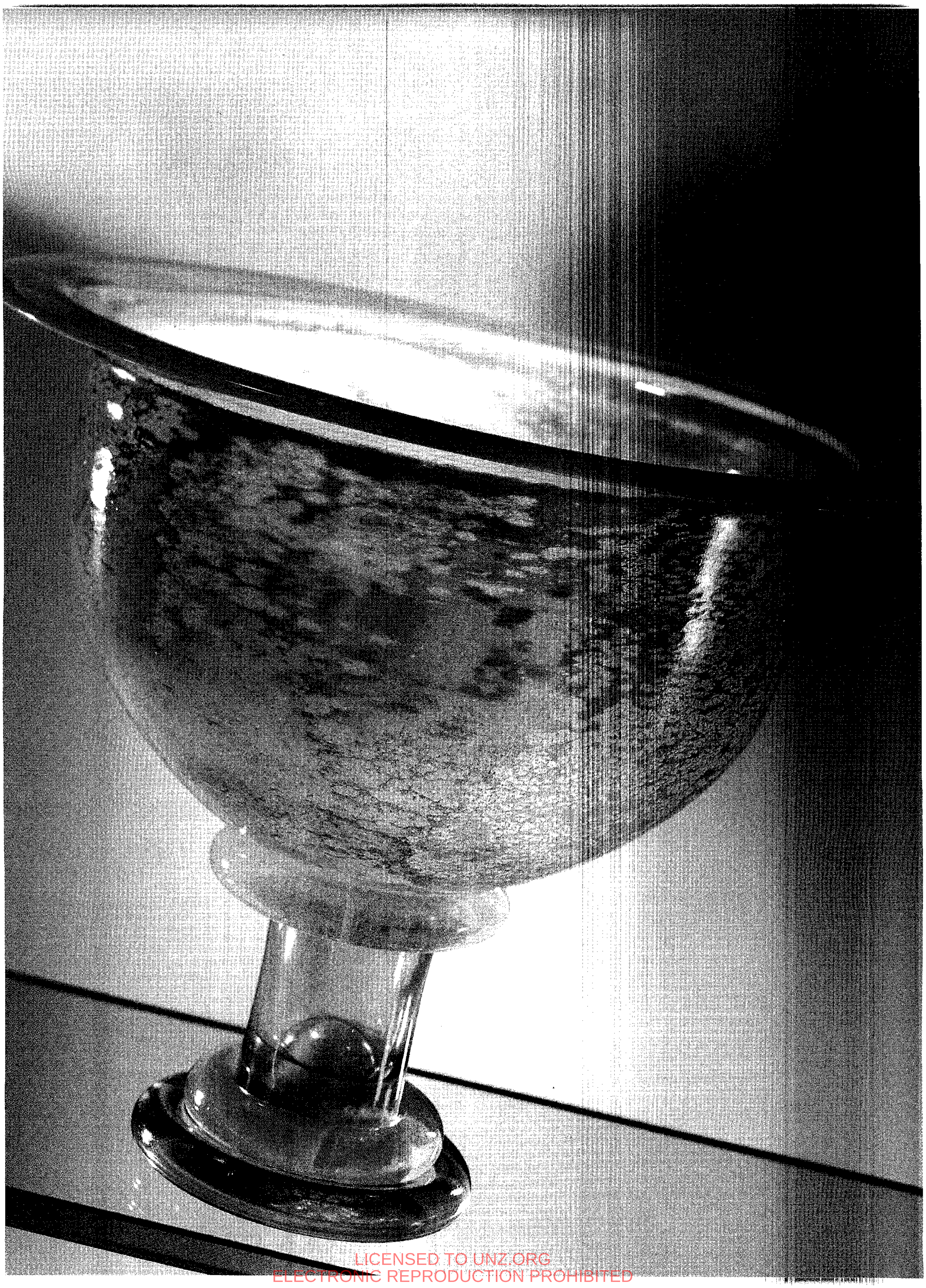

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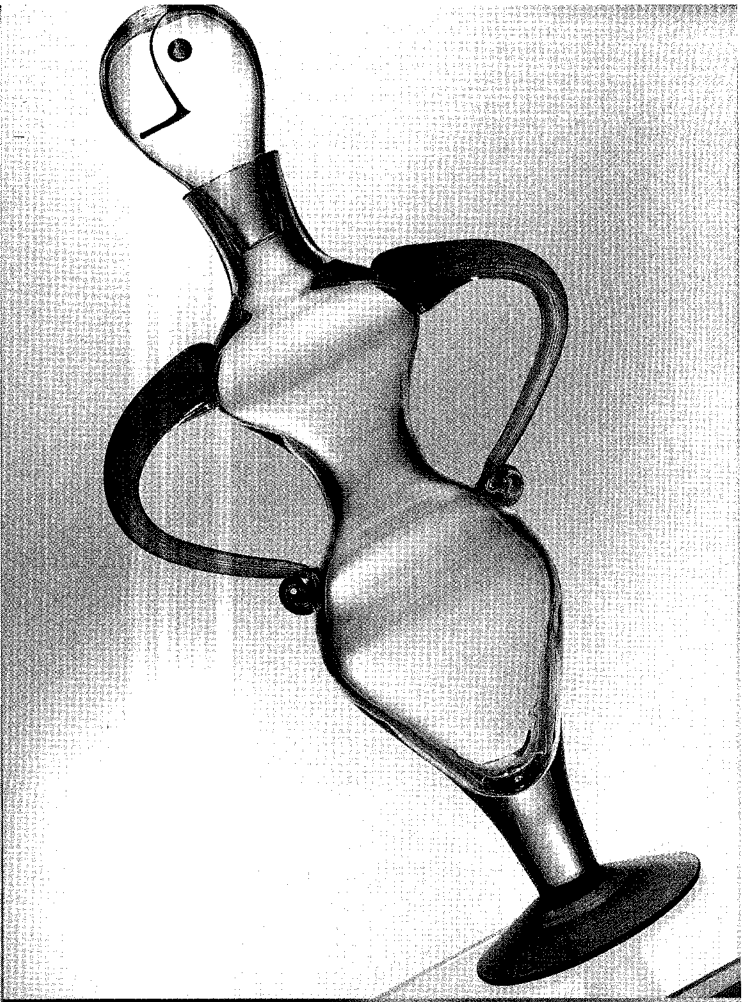

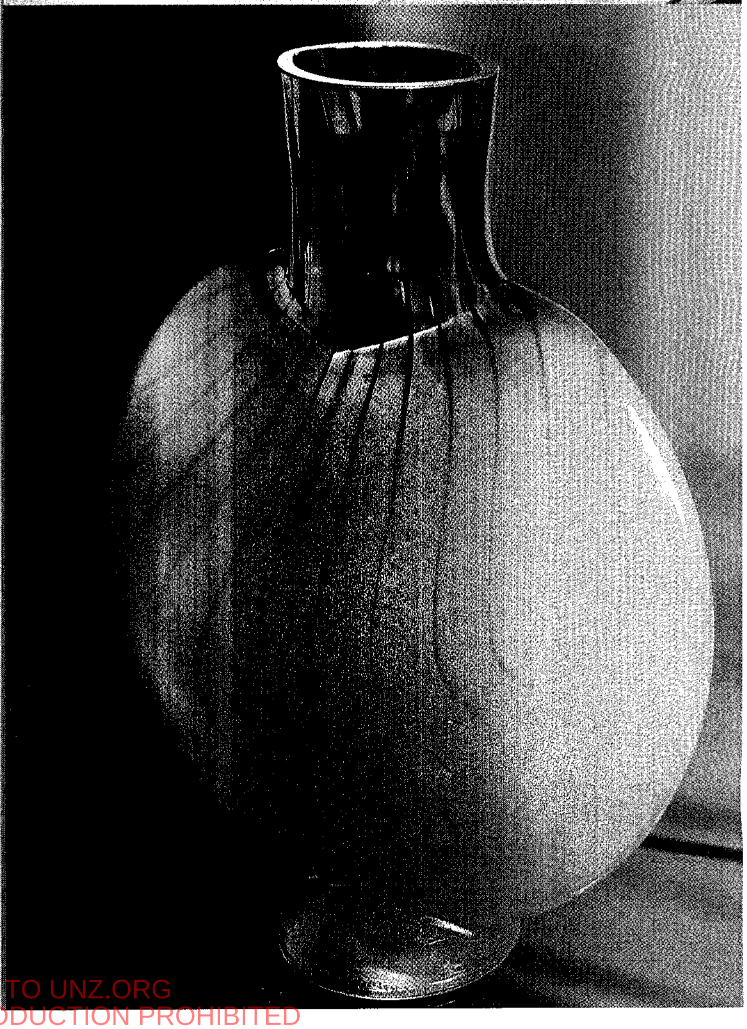

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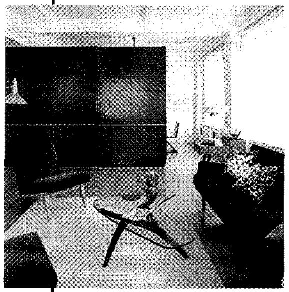
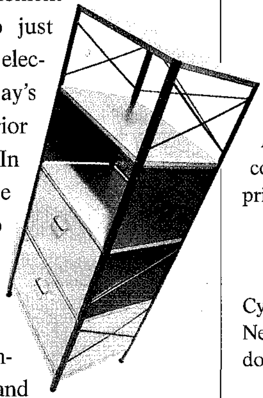
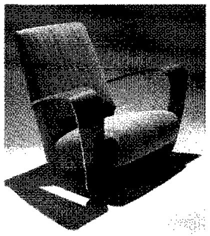


37 Home Design 1997

By Rene Chun

In a town where shiny pomo apartment towers loom over nineteenth-century townhouses, of-the-moment style translates into just the kind of eclectic, electric mix that today's architects and interior designers have embraced with fanatic fervor. In this issue: A prewar apartment embodying the chic Idlewild modernism of 1956. Gaetano Pesce's Crayola-colored playhouse. A Wrightish getaway in the Catskills where an artist communes—and designs—with nature. A sumptuous Upper East Side apartment swimming in silk pillows and richly patterned rugs that faces Mecca, and a collector's torrid love affair with chinoiserie. Ali Tayar proves he's a nineties Chippendale; boutique owner Rick Gallagher reveals where he finds his period wares; and we show once and for all that your home office needn't look ho-hum.

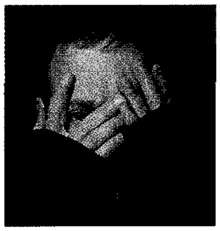




74 Boy Wonder

By Helen Eisenbach

David Sedaris once was employed as an elf. In a way, he still is: His brainy whimsy has won over playgoers and critics—if not his seventh-grade teacher—and got his new book, *Naked,* into print.



78 Russian Unorthodox

By Amei Wallach

This year's Whitney Biennial showcases Ilya Kabakov, a dissident Russian artist whose installations skewered the bureaucracy and insanity of Soviet life. Now he's turned his focus on his new home—New York. **Also:** A few perspectives on the Biennial, the show the New York art world loves to hate. **By Edith Newhall**

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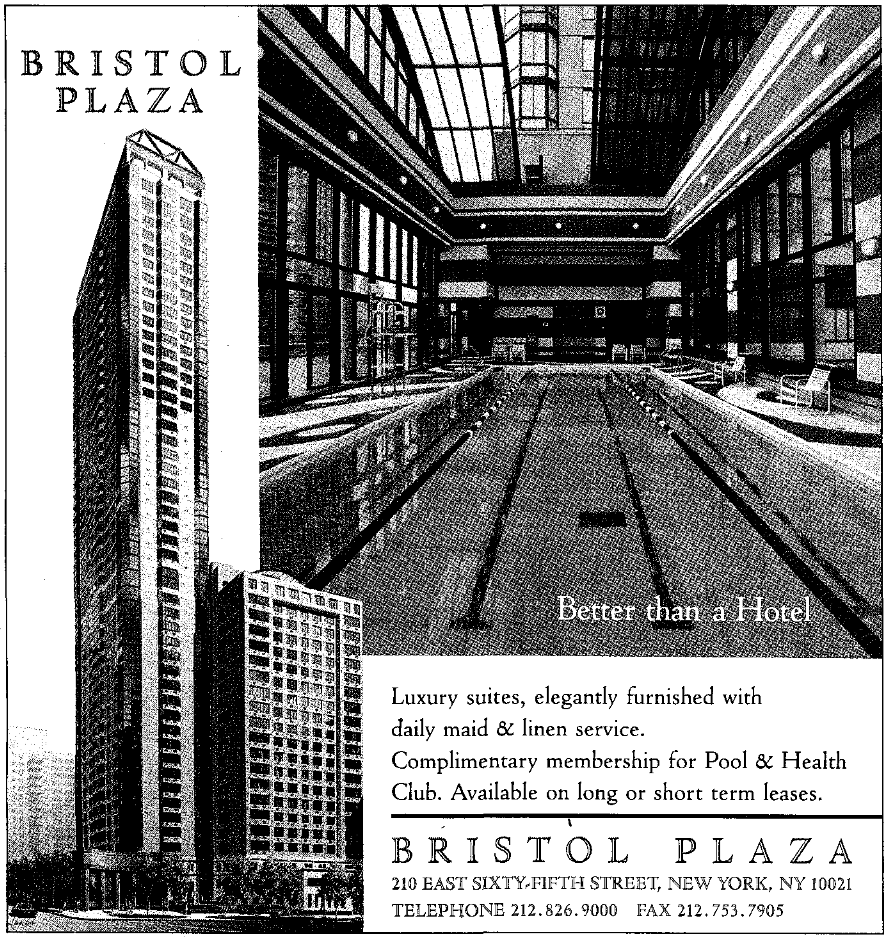

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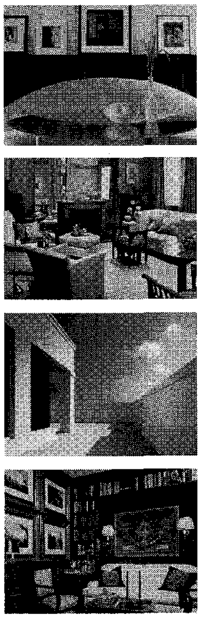

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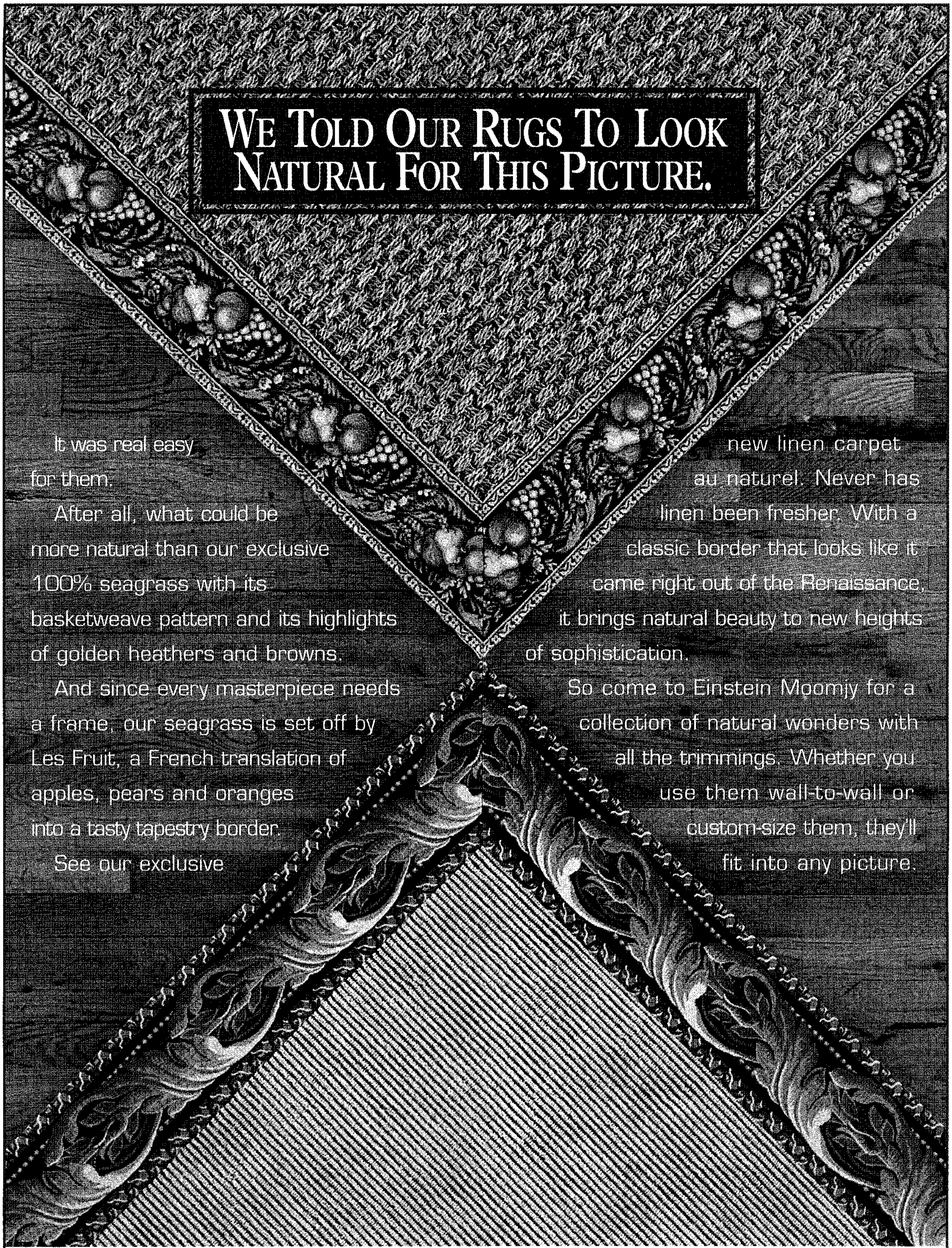

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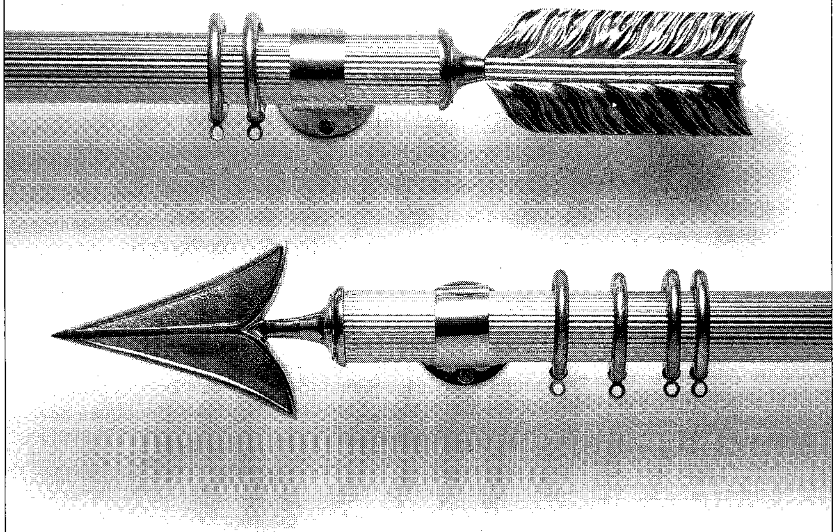

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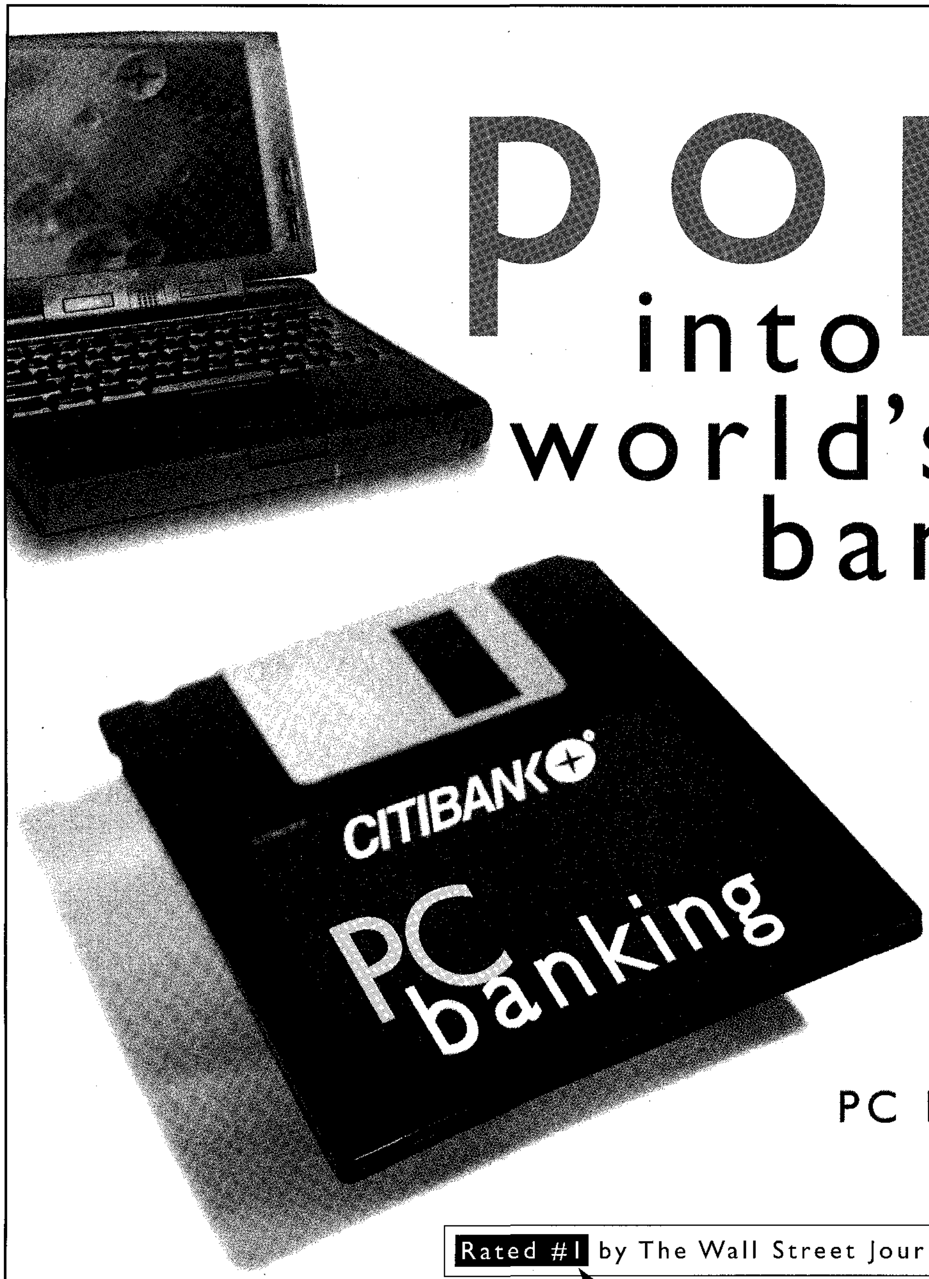

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Bar Talk

Amity in Schrager's hip empire? Is name-dropping an art? Can eco-consciousness throw off its sixties chains?

IN REGARD TO THE MARCH 10 ARTICLE "Inn Fighting," by Eric Konigsberg, I think it is important to clear up several inaccuracies. First of all, my professional relationship with Ian Schrager has been enormously rewarding for both of us; to create friction where there isn't any seems to me to be utterly superfluous. Second, Brian McNally, who seems to have quite a bit to say about me in the article, is a man I met only once, and actually found to be a nice guy. Third, Paul Montana's statement regarding my withholding profits is merely a bad attempt at making excuses for not paying his many creditors. Finally, Terry Quinn, who is described as someone I have had a "falling out" with, remains a very good friend.

As to all that other infighting, which was rather too cheerily recounted by Mr. Konigsberg, I think it makes good sense for all involved to chalk that up to the inevitable fallout of creative, and often volatile, businesspeople working in close proximity to one another.

In other words, shit happens. Sometimes, it really is just as simple as that.

Rande Gerber
MANHATTAN

GREAT ARTICLE ON THE SCHRAGER VISION. What used to be cool is now tired. Perhaps they can now change the name of Skybar to Hangar—lots of room (between the ears) and enough hot air to rival the Santa Ana. Not to worry: Mr. Schrager will never run out of wannabes and never-will-bes from Orange County and the Valley to keep Mr. Gerber's list of 250 full. And Mr. Gerber—maybe you should take some career tips from that eighties casualty of L.A. hubris Mario Oliver, ex–Vertigo ringmaster and ex–toy boy of Stephanie Grimaldi. Nobody in L.A. even bothers to ask, "Where's Mario?" And yes, you are not a nightclub—music would just get in the way.

Peter Alejandro
WEST LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

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A Real Original

AS A BARD GRADUATE AND FORMER STUDENT of Brad Morrow's, I just couldn't let Eric Konigsberg's February 10 article "The Next Hot Book" go unanswered. Little did I know that while I was attending Brad's weekly seminar "Contemporary Innovative Fiction," he was scurrying home to the city to churn out his own innovative, six-figure gold. Kudos, then, to Brad, not only for dropping every literary name in his Rolodex for the benefit of our impressionable Bard ears but also for doing the same for Konigsberg. At Bard, Brad was known more for the people he knew than for any book he had written. Also, the supposedly original cover design for *Giovanni's Gift* is quite reminiscent of Cristina Garcia's *Dreaming in Cuban*, which is done up like a cigar box. Pretty inventive.

Justine Gardner
BROOKLYN

Radical Remains

I LAUGHED HEARTILY READING "INTERNAL Conflicts Leave a Party in Green Pieces" ["Gotham," by Ed Shanahan, February 24]. I have been a nominal supporter of the Green Party but have been completely put off by the tired, wacky, and largely clueless people committed to the establishment of an inclusive Green Party. I am reminded of an incident last fall at the gathering of third-party hacks in support of Ralph Nader, running on the Green Party ticket. At this Ethical Humanist Society–hosted event, representatives from various third parties spoke in support (at least in principle) of the Nader candidacy. One woman, speaking from the stage, exclaimed fiercely during her moment in the spotlights, "Capitalism is *killing* us!" This to a crowd of nearly all white, affluent Manhattanites and suburban commuters.

Simon P. Tschinkel
MANHATTAN

I OBJECT TO ED SHANAHAN'S STATING THAT "the unity message [Craig Seeman] delivered the other day didn't win many converts." After all, there weren't many converts to win. The overwhelming majority of the Green Party of New York State agree that a unified Green Party is the best hope for the future of New York State. As to the accusation that we are "radical-leftists": Yes, we have radical-leftists. We also have moderate-leftists, conservatives, Democrats, and Republicans among our members. We can look at the legacy of the left with pride. Things that we take for granted today—such as a minimum wage for all working people, social security, worker-safety laws, child-labor laws, and product-safety regulations, just to name a few—were planks in left-wing political movements dating back to the nineteenth century.

As to the so-called splinter group: More than half of those calling for that meeting are not members of the Green Party, and even those who are have had very little to do with the reform effort. On a more personal note, although I may be somewhat rotund, I object to the description of myself as a "Buddha-bodied fellow."

Paul Diamond
Clearinghouse Coordinator
Green Party of New York State
BATAVIA, N.Y.

Protest Theater

WHEN A THEATER CRITIC JIBES AT THE YIDdish theater, he manages to pull himself down by his own bootstraps ["Theater: Women of No Importance," by John Simon, February 24]. Clumsily eviscerating an actor in *Three Sisters* as "seemingly a reject from the Yiddish theater, and not 60, but more like 90, years old," John Simon chose not to remember that the American stage and screen could provide more familiar comparisons. The Yiddish theater in America stands as a unique achievement by an immigrant people. No grants. No backers. No new blood. Attention should be paid, Mr. Simon, to Lebedoff, Schwartz, Adler, Thomashefsky, Muni, Picon, and Skulnik. The music of the Yiddish composers, from the genius of Goldfaden's operas to Olshanetsky, Sandler, Secunda, and Ellstein, has served American composers like George Gershwin. The playwrights were certainly no reason for sarcasm: Sholem Asch, Singer, Leivick, Ansky, and Shakespeare?

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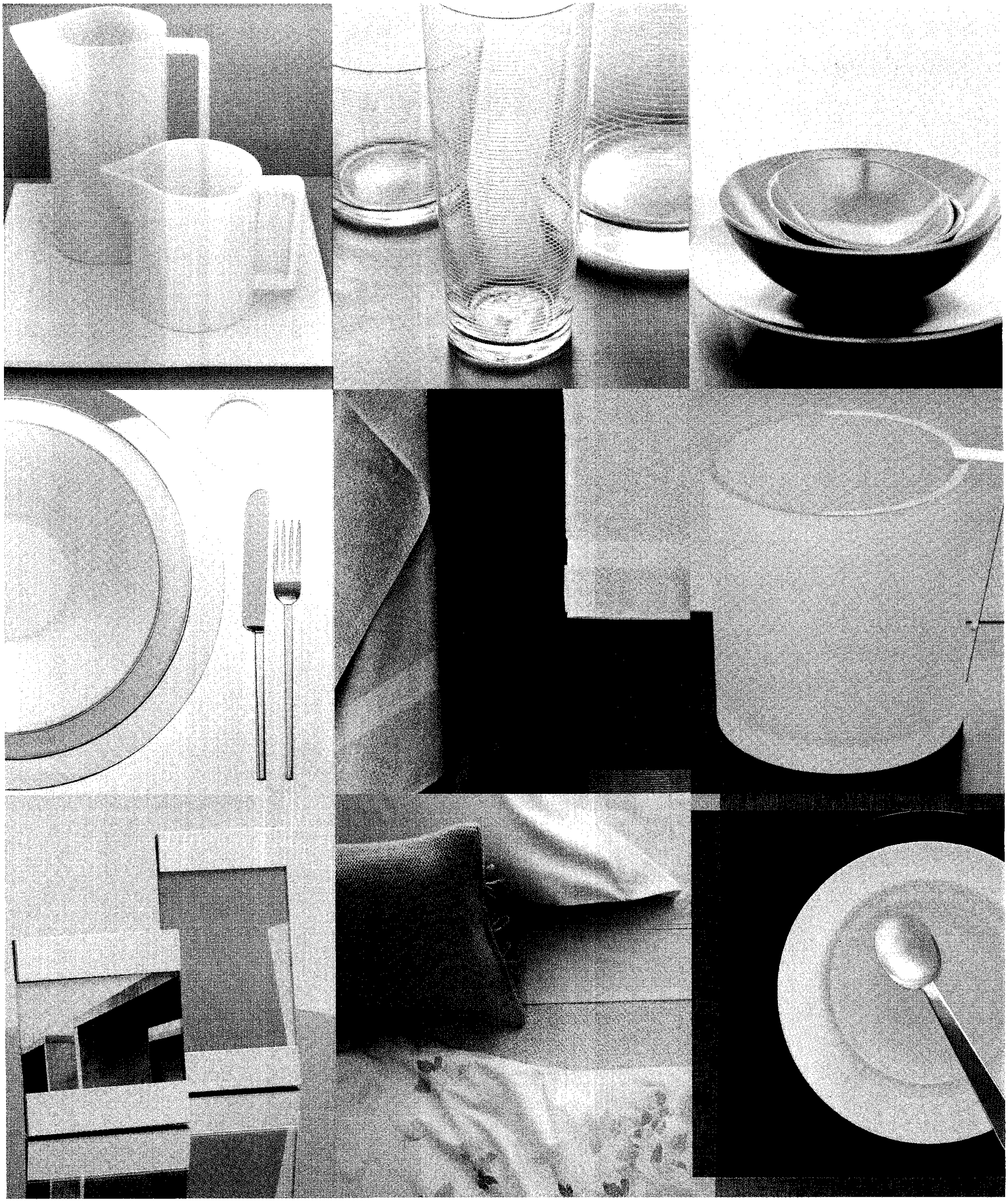

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BY BETH LANDMAN KEIL AND DEBORAH MITCHELL

INTELLIGENCER

THE HAIR FLIES ON MADISON AVENUE

The latest trend in hairdressing? Lawsuits. First **Frederic Fekkai** hit five of his former employees with an unprecedented $2 million suit each for walking out on him in a tonsorial coup and allegedly taking clients' hair formulas with them. Now it turns out that **Oribe** quietly served his former top colorist **Brad Johns** with a similar-style $1 million suit back in July. Oribe charged that Johns, who left and opened next door to his onetime employer (taking several clients, including **Carolyn Bessette Kennedy,** with him), breached his contract with the salon and disrupted its activity by leaving abruptly with customer lists, appointment books, and hair-color formulas. Despite the legal action, Oribe maintains, "This is strictly business; I wish him well." Although he declined to elaborate on the allegations, remarkably enough, Johns is equally civil, stressing, "Oribe and I are still good friends."

IN THE ROUGH WITH PERELMAN AND DUFF

Breaking up, then making up—that's been the public face on the volatile marriage of billionaire **Ronald Perelman** and his wife of two years, Democratic fund-raiser **Patricia Duff.** After he very publicly stormed out on her at the Democratic convention in Chicago last summer (forcing Duff and daughter **Caleigh** to take—horrors—a commercial airline back to New York), the battling couple reconciled with a romantic trip to Paris in the fall and a cozy dinner at Amici in Palm Beach last month. But through it all, the divorce proceeding initiated by Perelman last September 6 as Anonymous *v.* Anonymous has remained open in New York State Supreme Court. It seems that while the hint of reconciliation was in the air, there wasn't much litigation going on. But that ended on March 6, when Duff's lawyer, **Robert Stephan Cohen,** filed a motion to compel Perelman to list his assets, income, and expenses. Sources close to Duff say it's doubtful that her divorce settlement will reach the $50 million figure that's been reported. Neither Cohen nor **Adria Hillman,** Perelman's attorney, chose to comment. And friends of the couple warn against reading too much into the latest filing: The relationship between the peripatetic Perelmans changes "hour by hour," sighs one pal.

Patricia Duff:
Accounting for Ron

WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT?

It turns out all's fair in Love and war, after all. Sixties songbird **Darlene Love,** the lead singer of the Crystals, has conquered the Goliath of the girl-group era, **Phil Spector.** Love has been in litigation against Spector for four years in an effort to receive back royalties due her since 1987. Finally, on March 7, a jury of the New York State Supreme Court handed down a verdict awarding the singer more than a quarter of a million dollars. Things are looking good for Love: In addition to getting the favorable verdict, she's writing a biography for William Morrow, and a movie based on her life story is being pitched to the studios.

IS A REVOLUTION UNDER WAY AT *GEORGE*?

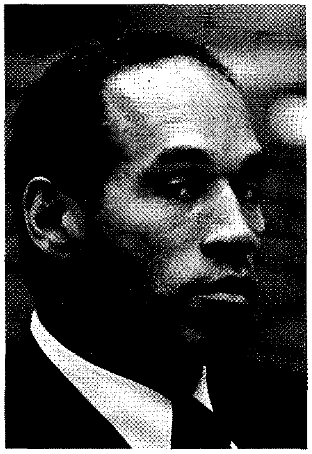
Things are really heating up at *George,* where, sources say, a blowup between **John F. Kennedy Jr.** and the magazine's president and co-founder, **Michael Berman,** became so loud and unpleasant that security was called. According to publishing insiders, the former world's most eligible bachelor and Berman, who were personal friends before being business associates, have had a tumultuous relationship for more than a year, and there has been speculation as to how this might be resolved. Calls to JFK and Berman were initially returned by Hachette publicist Keith Estabrook, who offered a terse "We can't comment on that now." A second call to Estabrook was returned by outside public-relations firm Howard Rubenstein. When asked about the incident, Steven Rubenstein echoed, "We have no comment."

John F. Kennedy:
Security-conscious

THE HAWKE LANDS AT CPW

Just how determined is **Ethan Hawke** to shed his "grunge god" persona for a more mature image? Not only is Hawke slated to appear as the clean-cut, bespectacled protagonist in this summer's Orwellian sci-fi drama *Gattaca,* he's moving on up from Gen-X-friendly downtown to Central Park West. Hawke has just bought an apartment in the Ardsley, in the West Nineties. But the *Hottest State* auteur isn't abandoning his Chelsea digs just yet—the one-bedroom pad is for his mother. The move will make Mama Hawke the neighbor of **Barbra Streisand,** who's lived there since the sixties. At least Hawke will be able to visit Mom relatively anonymously. Says one longtime

Photographs: top, George Lange/Outline; bottom, Andrea Renault/Globe Photos.



O. J. Simpson: Lost it at the movies

WESTWOOD'S NEW INTERACTIVE THEATER

O. J. Simpson may be treated like a VIP by the management at the United Artists movie theater in Westwood, but to the patrons, he's a pariah. Opening weekend, people who went there to see *Donnie Brasco* were treated to the sight of the Juice and his bodyguard, who had been admitted early as a courtesy, seated alone in the center of the theater. As seats filled up, those on either side of the two remained empty. Just as the lights were dimming, a couple of girls bounded down the aisle to grab the prime seats. When they realized who their neighboring viewer was, they slithered away to the back. "It was an eerie, ominous feeling to walk in to see this violent film and have O.J. there," says one moviegoer. Apparently, his presence was particularly felt during a scene in which people start chopping up bodies with a butcher knife. "You couldn't forget he was there, particularly because he was grunting audibly," says the observer, who was seated directly behind him. As for giving O.J. the superstar treatment, the theater defends its policy. "Celebs in general we tend to let in early. It's a courtesy thing, you know, an L.A. thing," explains a theater employee. "And who is more famous than O.J.?" Says one Hollywood screenwriter, "If Charles Manson stopped by, they'd probably give him a whole row and a big bucket of popcorn."

Jennifer Flavin: Check's in the mail

resident, "Is he that guy who always needs a shave?"

TAYLOR-MADE PART: **Elizabeth Taylor**'s recovery from brain surgery seems to be going well. Now comes word that she's rehired her longtime agent **Robert Lantz** to revive her career. "I hope to set up a real return to the movies for her," reports Lantz. "Only in Hollywood would they waste the energy and fame of that name."

MEDIA SPIN-OFF: They were the darling of media couples last year, telecommunications entrepreneur **Lynn Forrester** (the ex of **Andy Stein**) and *Time* magazine's **Michael Kramer** (the ex of Judge **Kimba Wood**). The romance between Forrester and Kramer was followed avidly in New York, Washington, and Martha's Vineyard in the wake of Kramer's messy divorce from Wood, who was branded "the Love Judge" after her affair with financier **Frank Richardson.** Now comes word that Forrester and Kramer, while still "good friends," as the saying goes, are no longer officially dating.

HOME SHOPPING: *Speed* queen **Sandra Bullock** and rugged heartthrob **Matthew McConaughey** may insist that they are just good buddies, but it looks like they are about to shack up together. According to Hollywood sources, Bullock enthused over a recent dinner with former beau **Michael Mailer** (son of **Norman**) that she and McConaughey were in the process of buying a house together on a lake outside Austin, because the two "both love the outdoors." While Bullock's spokeswoman says that the actress will indeed be in Austin, starring in and co-producing the film *Hope Floats,* she denies that the famous pair are setting up house, adding, "They are just friends."

FRIENDS OF WENDY: "I've been green with envy for years, because all my pals get into movies," reports National Public Radio correspondent **Susan Stamberg,** who has watched from the sidelines while co-workers **Nina Totenberg** and **Daniel Schorr** played reporters on film. "But none of *them* has been on *Broadway*!" Which is where Stamberg—or at least her voice—will be, eight times a week, starting this Thursday. Stamberg has two lines as an NPR reporter in *An American Daughter,* the new play by her friend **Wendy Wasserstein.** The topical play, which is about a surgeon general–designate facing opposition à la Zoe Baird, is punctuated with newscasts, and Wasserstein turned to her friends in the media to record the bits. Listen for *Slate*'s **Michael Kinsley;** *48 Hours* producer **Peter Schweitzer;** WABC-TV's **Sarah Wallace;** and, of course, **Charlie Rose.**

Wasserstein: Play mates

Additional reporting: Kate Coyne

THE PAXSONS WON'T PASS THE BUCK

Jennifer Flavin, Eva Herzigova, and **Marla Maples Trump** were among the celebrities modeling **Nolan Miller's** spring line at the tony Palm Beach home of **Marla Paxson** (wife of Home Shopping Network mogul **Lowell "Bud" Paxson**) last month. They weren't expecting to be paid, since the event was a benefit for the Lupus Foundation that netted some $600,000. But a slew of other models was also on hand to show off Miller's clothes and furs by Revillon, and they had each been promised $500 for the day. Those bills have yet to be paid, causing a dispute that's resulting in a lot of finger-pointing between the furrier and Paxson, who's been committed to the cause since her daughter, **Nicole Paxson,** was diagnosed with lupus. "The fashion show was underwritten by Revillon," sniffs a Paxson assistant. "We were not responsible for payment to individual vendors," replies a Revillon spokeswoman, who insists that the "significant" check Revillon sent the Paxsons for the show included a fee for the models. Not so, counters the Paxson person, who says that Revillon has now promised to make good to the models. "The day of the show, the models didn't have any food, because [Revillon] didn't have it arranged," continues the source, who says that the Paxsons brought food and water in to the hungry mannequins. The Paxsons have promised to make good on all the bills if the problems with Revillon persist.

Photographs: clockwise from top left, Bill Nation/Sygma; Gerardo Somoza/Outline; Andrea Renault/Globe Photos.

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London is important. New York is more important—*Gary Graffman*

Fame

G’DAY, NEW YORK: DAVID HELFGOTT FACES THE MUSIC

TELEVISION-SATELLITE VANS parked around the block and a mad crush of bodies at the doors are scenes not usually associated with an evening at Boston Symphony Hall. But these are not your typical concertgoers; most are here because they have seen *Shine* and want to catch a glimpse of Australia’s unlikely celebrity, pianist David Helfgott.

“Been through hell,” Helfgott is saying in his hotel room before the concert. He repeats the phrase, like a mantra. “Been through hell. But everyone goes through hell, everyone goes through it. But that’s all right. It’s all over. All over. Relax relax relax. Gentle gentle gentle.”

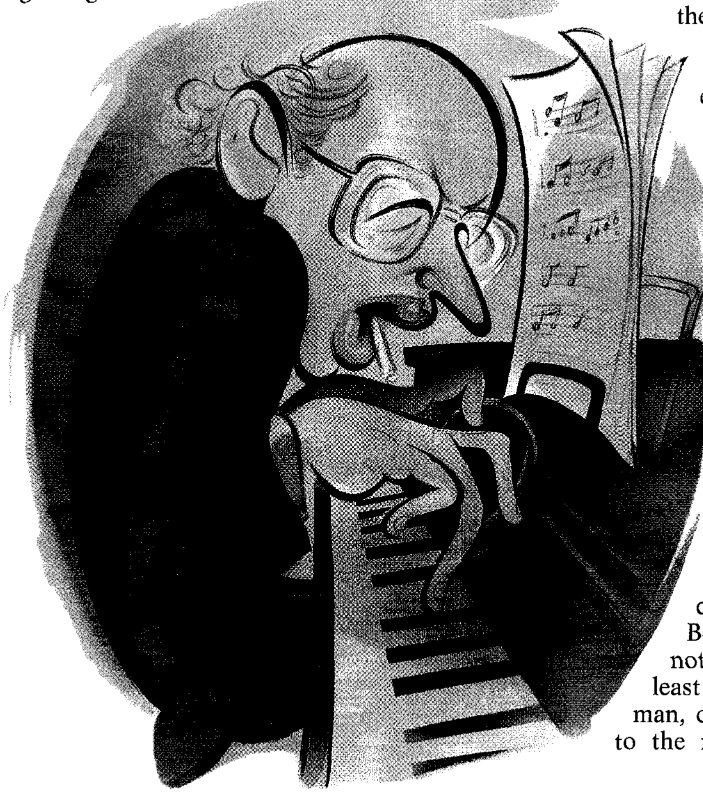


Illustration by Eric Palma

The hall fills quickly. When Helfgott appears, the audience breaks into applause. He runs to center stage and bows several times before beginning his program. His muttering and self-conducting are well documented, but they still prove disorienting; the humming and singing are almost ceaseless and not always in tune with his playing. At the same time, you can feel the goodwill flowing from audience to stage and back; it’s palpable, though the tension between discomfort and sympathy never quite disappears.

“*Whoooaa,*” Helfgott tells himself in the second half as he starts to speed up his playing. The audience responds to the moments of technical brilliance but seems lost in the concert’s overall lack of focus and coherence. Nevertheless, they reward him with three emotional standing ovations. People rush down the aisles to shake his hand, one after another after another; they seem practically worshipful in his presence.

The warmth of the audience response contrasts strikingly with the next day’s reviews. The Boston *Globe* critic notes that no one, least of all this fragile man, could measure up to the myth created by *Shine,* and concludes, “The sad fact is that David Helfgott should not have been in Symphony Hall last night, and neither should the rest of us.”

Not surprisingly, Helfgott’s brother, Les, disagrees. “Audiences love him,” he says. “That was true in Australia even before *Shine*. The people who don’t usually see concerts are going because they want to see David.”

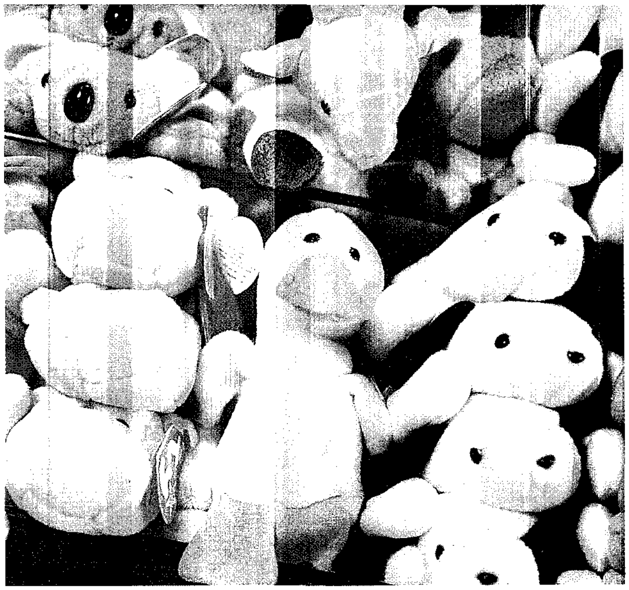
But *Shine* has created the expectation that while his character will be as eccentric as Geoffrey Rush, who plays him, his idiosyncrasies will not interfere with his pianism. Helfgott himself is a messier package. And inevitably, his celebrity has caused internecine resentments in the classical-music world, as sales of his recording of the Rachmaninoff Third Piano Concerto dwarf the competition. He’s all Three Tenors rolled into one, and as with them, it’s critics be damned. Helfgott’s baptism of fire continues on March 18, when the tour brings him to Avery Fisher Hall. Critics will again have their say, and customers will keep lining up to buy discs and tickets.

But now, back in his dressing room after the Boston concert, Helfgott circles the room, hugging everyone. Sweat drips down his back, and he seems particularly elevated (he’s always elevated). He remembers people’s names with ease: “Ohhh there’s David there’s Sarah there’s Simon there’s Peter,” he says, giving equal time to each.

After about ten minutes, he sits down at a piano propped in the corner of the room. His wife, Gillian, kisses the top of his head. “The piano is his whole life,” says Les. “He would be playing in his room if he wasn’t playing at a concert hall. That’s the way it has always been.”

Helfgott suddenly begins playing a Beethoven sonata, something he will do with as much brio for an audience of a few as he will for thousands. One suspects that in the end, he is playing for an audience of one, that no one else can hear in the notes the memory and sadness and sickness and fame with which that instrument has furnished him.

ONDINE COHANE



Duck! Beanie Babies are flying off the shelves at city toy stores.

Trends

THE MASS MENAGERIE: KIDS AND THEIR BEANIES

BEANIE BABIES MAY HAVE HIT NEW YORK'S elementary-school set late, but they have hit hard. Introduced early in 1994 by Ty Inc., a toy-maker in Oakbrook, Illinois, the Beanie genus now totals some 99 sensuous, bead-filled, Chinese-made creatures about the size of small ferrets, from Bessie the Cow to Bumble the Bee. Ty plans to retire them at random, some as soon as four years after their birth (the half-life of the plastic pellets inside them is anybody's guess), which has some third-graders at Hunter College Elementary School speculating about, among other things, the future value of their investments.

"Chocolate the Moose was born on April 27, 1993," sighs Rebecca, an 8-year-old. "That means this year he gets retired." Like all Beanie Babies, Chocolate comes with a heart-shaped name tag that includes his D.O.B. and a little personal history in the form of a four-line bit of doggerel. More information about him and his colleagues is available at the Beanie Baby Website (http://www.ty.com). Ty won't release sales figures, but a company spokeswoman recently told the Wilmington, North Carolina, *Morning Star* that staff, storage, and production had all recently been quadrupled.

Beanie Babies ride in knapsacks, lounge on bureaus, are smuggled into classrooms, and often may be found tangled in the bedclothes of the parents whose children hoard them and lose them. At $4.99, they appear at first to be an inexpensive habit, until you find yourself the owner of 74 of them, like one second-grader at Brearley, whose stash represents a $369 investment—so far, anyway: As with Pogs, Wacky Packs, and, of course, Barbies, the more Beanie Babies you possess, the cooler you are, and the more you need in order to stay cool.

"The pricing is key," says one mother who defines the Beanie Baby phenomenon as "the 7-year-old version of keeping up with the Joneses. It's brilliant on [Ty's] part. I mean, $4.99 seems like it's not such a big amount. But this trancelike state comes over you, and you end up buying eight of them."

At its endangered-species exhibit, the American Museum of Natural History has introduced its own line that look and feel suspiciously like Beanie Babies. But today's kids appear to have no more patience for these Beanie Baby knockoffs than their parents did for fake Davy Crockett coonskin caps. No heart tag, no dice.

Recently at Noodle Kidoodle, on the Upper East Side, an order of 400 Beanies lasted less than half a day, according to Tim Ye, an assistant manager there.

The fad is not limited to girls—or even to children, for that matter: "They're all over my office!" admits a producer at ABC News's *Turning Point,* where there is a Beanie hour for play dates ("I'll bring Bones over to play with Bessie around noon") as well as mysterious Beanie-hiding games.

How long will the craze last? "I think it's a fad," says Emily, an Ethical Culture School second-grader and mistress of what she considers a paltry collection of five. "It's gonna pass—and everyone's just gonna be left with these things that they really don't care about." She catches herself, aware that her mother is listening and that her birthday is imminent. "But I like them, and I still wanna be a part of the fad," she adds. A week later, the five are fifteen, and counting. DANY LEVY

Smoking

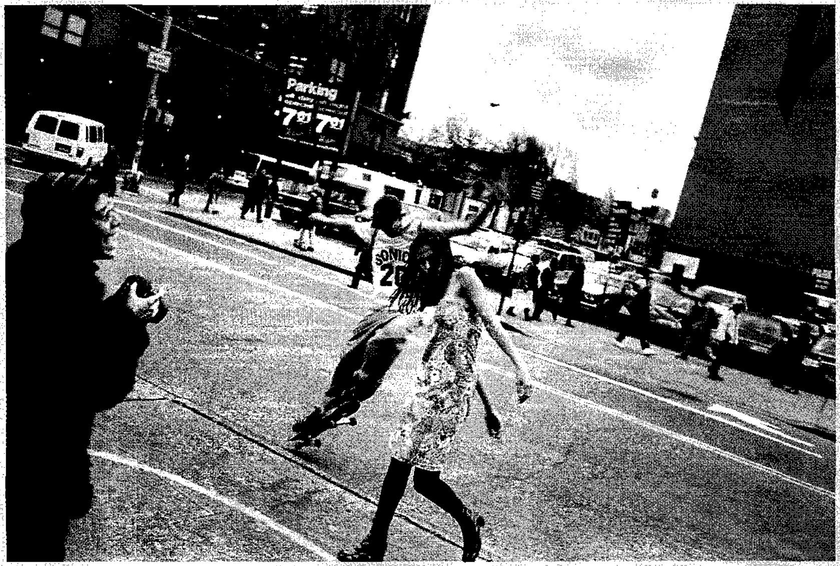
TOBACCO MODE: *NO* DIPPING IN THE COGNAC

"THE VANILLA CIGARS ARE REALLY FLYING out of here," says Jonathan Sloan, wine-and-cigar director at Decade, a new restaurant and supper club on the Upper East Side. "The women think they're the best thing since sliced bread. The ones dipped in cognac haven't caught on yet."

Sloan spent eight years as a wine expert for a leading distributor. His new clients aren't usually as sophisticated as the oenophiles of his past. "The flavored cigars," he admits, "are the wine coolers of the industry. Purists like myself would never want to mask the aroma."

Sloan, 31, is one of a new breed of restaurant-service employee: the cigar sommelier. As sales continue to boom, cigar bars, boutiques, and lounges are springing up everywhere (remember the smoking ban?), and popular restaurants are reducing table space to make

SHOT



Cooper Square, 5:30 P.M., Saturday, March 8, *photographed by Barry Munger.*

Photograph by Steven Freeman.

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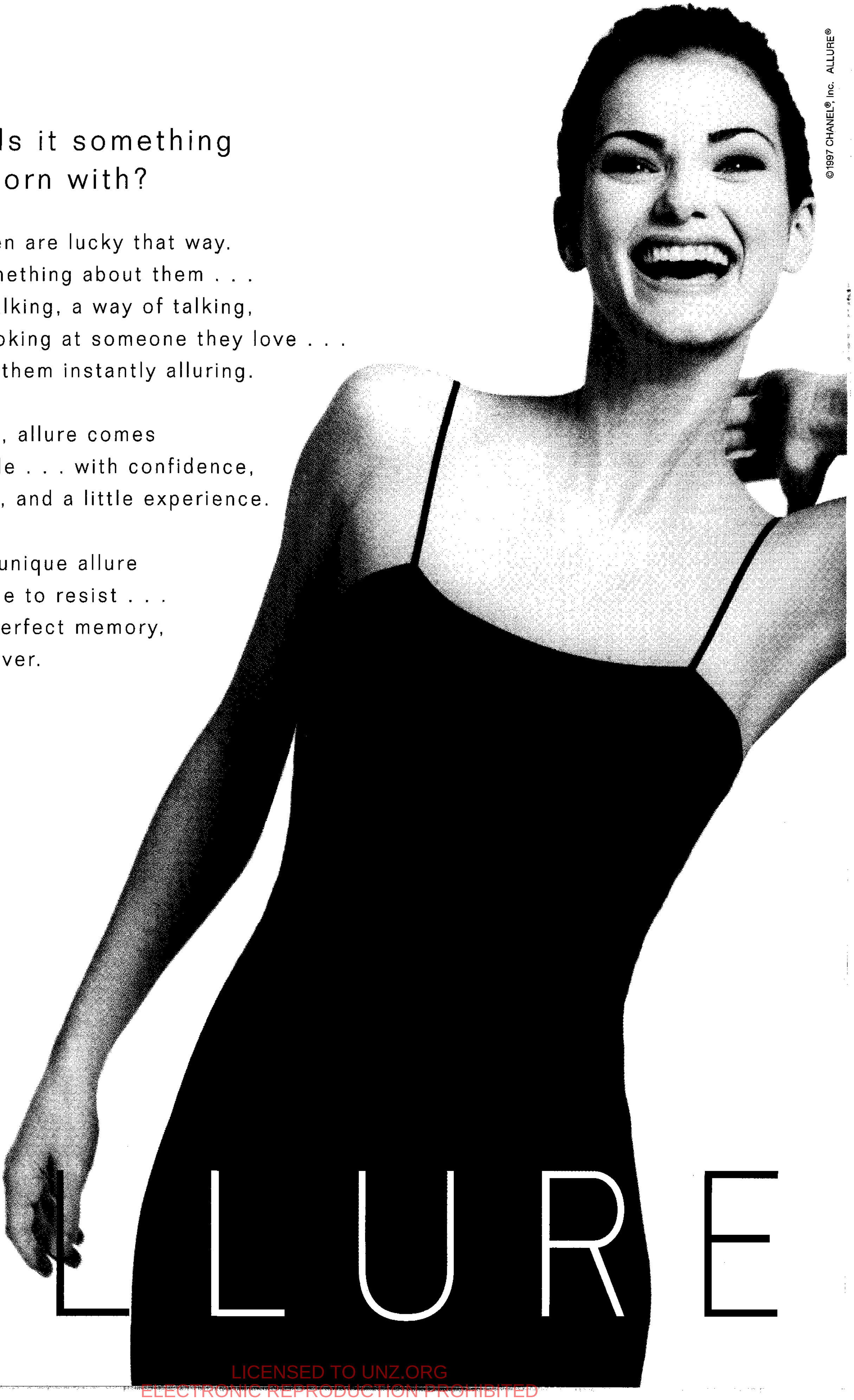

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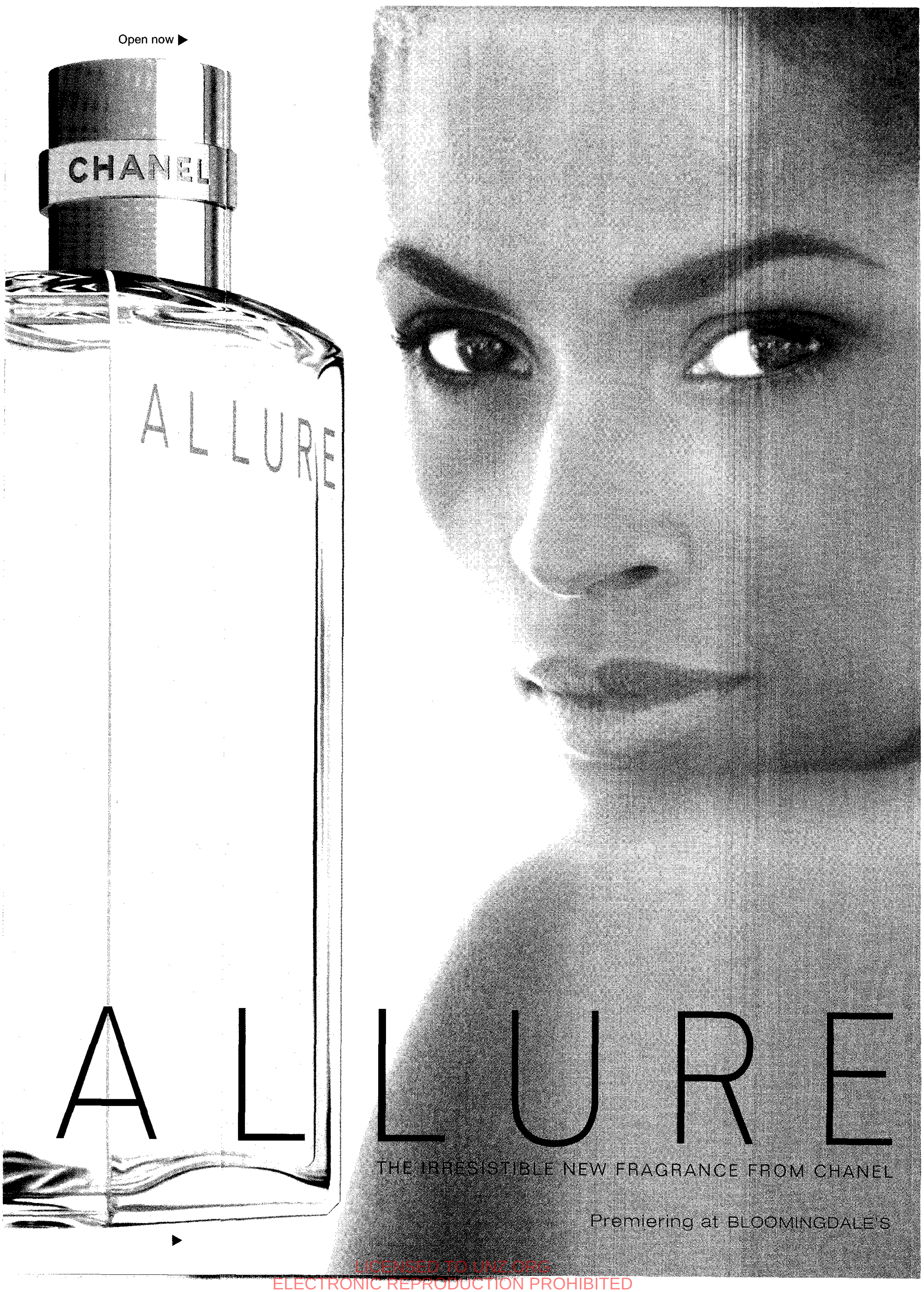

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How does one become a certified cigar sommelier? Jennifer Fuller—an aspiring actress from Michigan who landed a job as a cocktail waitress–cum–cigar sommelier at Patroon, which caters to the red-meat-and-martini crowd—went to school. "It's a four-week course at Club Macanudo," she says, proffering a cigar menu featuring 80 choices. "The class met once a week for two hours, and we learned about cigars, and what drinks to recommend with them."

"You just can *never* learn the nuances of cigars in four classes," sniffs Sloan. "No one can differentiate between a Honduran and a Nicaraguan in a month!"

Piffle, responds Jennifer. "They both use fillers from other places anyway."

The idea for the six-month-old Cigar School at Club Macanudo came from general manager Philip Darrow. "I felt there was a real need for it," he says. "It's now gotten to the point where corporations are sending their key executives here to learn cigar etiquette."

The finer points include lighting and relighting; not dipping your cigar into your cognac ("why would you ever want to change the taste?" asks Darrow); not basing your selection on your gender, height, and weight—"A tall, thin man needn't always be seen with a Panatela" —and distinguishing a real Cuban from a fake.

"Personally, I prefer an Arturo Fuente Hemingway Signature," says Thurston T. Yates Jr., cigar director–sommelier of the Granville and Match restaurants. "It's perfect for all occasions, with notes of cocoa and hazelnut." And what does *he* think of a Honduran versus, say, a Nicaraguan? "Well, a Honduran has a larger range of flavor, an earthier finish. The Nicaraguans had a problem with blue mold."

A Master of the Universe type enjoying his large, expensive Davidoff Aniversario No. 2 in an overstuffed leather chair at Venue on the Upper West Side didn't hear the question in context and offered, with a Locust Valley–lockjawed intonation: "Actually, the Hondurans make great nannies, while the Nicaraguans tend to be better gardeners."

BRADEN KEIL

Cops & Kids

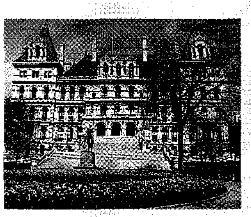
THE ART OF STAYING COOL WHEN THE HEAT IS ON

AT THE EAST HARLEM TUTORIAL PROGRAM on Second Avenue, Sebene Selassie was telling a group of about twenty kids gathered for a seminar on "Police Confrontation" the three rules governing what to say to the men in blue if they've pronounced you under arrest: "Shut up. Be quiet. Don't say anything."

Khaliq, a diminutive 13-year-old, leaned forward. "I know you're allowed a lawyer, but what I'm saying is, some

THE SKINNY

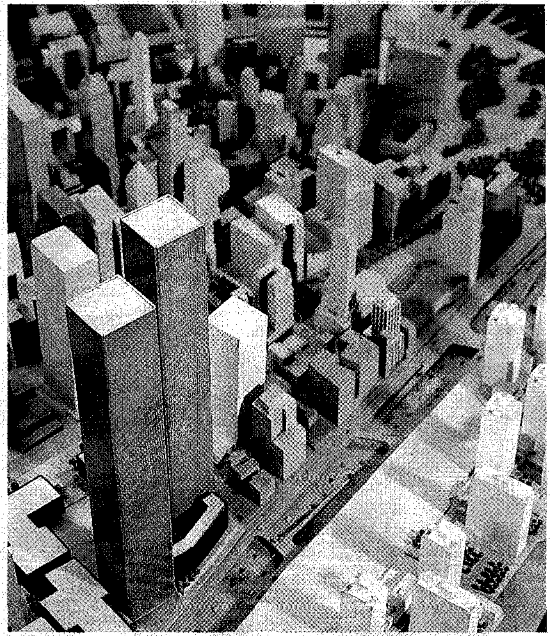
OFF THE RECORD When State Assemblywoman Susan John (chair of the alcoholism committee) was picked up outside Albany for drunk driving at 1:30 A.M. last Tuesday, her colleagues were shocked, though not all of them for the obvious reason. "I was really surprised that she found a place to stay out that late," one assemblyman told *New York.* "There's nothing to do at night in Albany. We go out to dinner, we go to the gym, but there's nowhere to do any good partying around here."



SITE LINES

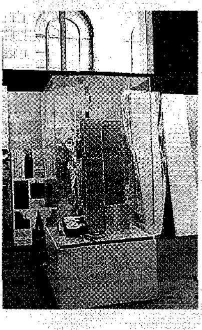
Tall Tales

At 44 Wall Street, in a cavernous storefront once occupied by a branch of NatWest Bank, architectural historian Carol Willis offers the public a preview of her planned Skyscraper Museum. In a space blessed with twenty-foot-high windows (and cursed with a noxious purple carpet), "Downtown New York: The Architecture of Business/The Business of Buildings" is scheduled to open later this month and remain open through the summer. The beauty of this exhibition, which Willis hopes will lay the groundwork for a permanent museum, is that many of the buildings shown in detailed construction photos and scale models are directly outside, visible through the big windows.



Vertical hold: Models at the new Skyscraper Museum.

"I'm going to put a sign here that says LOOK UP!," declares Willis, as she points out a steeply angled view of the 1931 City Bank Farmer's Trust's spindly tower. Inside the former bank branch, Willis's distinctly pragmatic take on urban form is evident in the collection of artifacts she unearthed in building-management offices and secondhand shops. There's a miniature office used to sell office furniture in the thirties, and a meticulous log of construction expenses kept by the Starrett Brothers, who built 40 Wall Street, right next door (currently being redeveloped by Donald Trump).



There is also a discomfiting model of lower Manhattan's renewal as envisioned by planners of the early seventies: Expressways wipe out Broome Street and much of Chinatown, and a Battery Park City is a parade of Modernist slabs. Outside the museum, just across Wall Street, is an example of how today's planners wish to renew the neighborhood—an old office tower is swiftly being converted into apartments. The museum demystifies Manhattan's architecture with information-rich displays. The streets reinforce the story with a visceral wallop. "New York is the exhibition," states Willis. "This is the orientation point."

KARRIE JACOBS

Photographs: clockwise from top left, Steven Freeman(3); Frederick McKinney/FPG.

Not a Page-Turner

At the Public Library for the seventh annual LMP Awards for Excellence in Book Publishing.

By Ariel Kaminer
Photographed by Patrick McMullan

Top, ***The Book Report*'s Jesse Kornbluth and Katie Couric at the LMP Awards. Above, Elaine Kaufman congratulating Joey Heatherton on her appearance in *Playboy*.**

KATIE COURIC MUST HAVE BEEN FOREwarned that hosting the LMP Awards, an annual ceremony for the publishing industry, would not be a glamorous appearance for her; she did it, she said, out of her own love of books. But it wasn't clear that she understood just how much of a sacrifice she'd be making. These were, after all, book people. Neither the kind who exchange harrumphing letters in *The New York Review* nor the kind who hide between the covers of a gothic romance. These were people who dream about first serial rights, who divide the world into trade, mass, and academic. By the beginning of the second hour, things were starting to seriously drag.

"We'd like to thank the Academy for this award," joked Judy Hilsinger, winner of the Advertising/Promotion/Publicity category. "It's the wrong coast," laughed her partner, Sandi Mendelson, putting it mildly.

"I've got an appointment to get my hair colored," Couric warned, "so moving right along . . ."

Hovering over the proceedings was the benevolent spirit of Oprah Winfrey, whose monthly book chat has done more to boost the flagging industry than an army of its sales reps ever could. She was voted Person of the Year, putting it mildly, and sent author Wally Lamb to accept on her behalf. He was gracious, but even he had more exciting places to go. "I've got to get the top of my head colored," he apologized.

Clockwise from upper left: Alexandra Penney, Jane Stanton Hitchcock, and Linda Fairstein at Champagne's for the twentieth anniversary of literary publicist Hilsinger Mendelson; Nick Pileggi and Regis Philbin at San Pietro following *Allure*'s screening of *Paradise Road;* at St. Patrick's Cathedral for a performance of Patrick Cassidy's *Famine Remembrance,* the composer and Diana Ross; Meg Ryan, Rosanna Arquette, Ann Jones, and Griffin Dunne at Granville, where *Paper* hosted a party for Arquette's cover.

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cops won't let you have one when you ask them."

"*Forget* it," snapped Stephen Morris, a volunteer with the National Lawyers Guild who was conducting the seminar. "Once you've been arrested, it's over with the cops—don't talk to the cops anymore." The seminar is part of the Guild's Street Law Project, aimed at making sure people know their rights as well as the consequences of arrest.

This is no gathering of parolees or gang members, either; it's part of the teen leadership program at East Harlem Tutorial, where smart kids are learning the ropes of getting patted down, and what questions police can and can't ask you. After last month's talks between the mayor and Schools Chancellor Rudy Crew about ceding security of city schools to the NYPD, the amount of cop-kid interaction could increase substantially. Kids like Khaliq, who attends a select Harlem junior high school, have to be prepared, especially if a run-in with the law might interfere with plans for college—or get you seriously hurt.

Khaliq's never been arrested, but he's been stopped enough times and patted down by police. Usually it's after there's been trouble in his Bronx neighborhood—a shooting in his building, for instance. In his world, it doesn't take much to cross the threshold of probable cause.

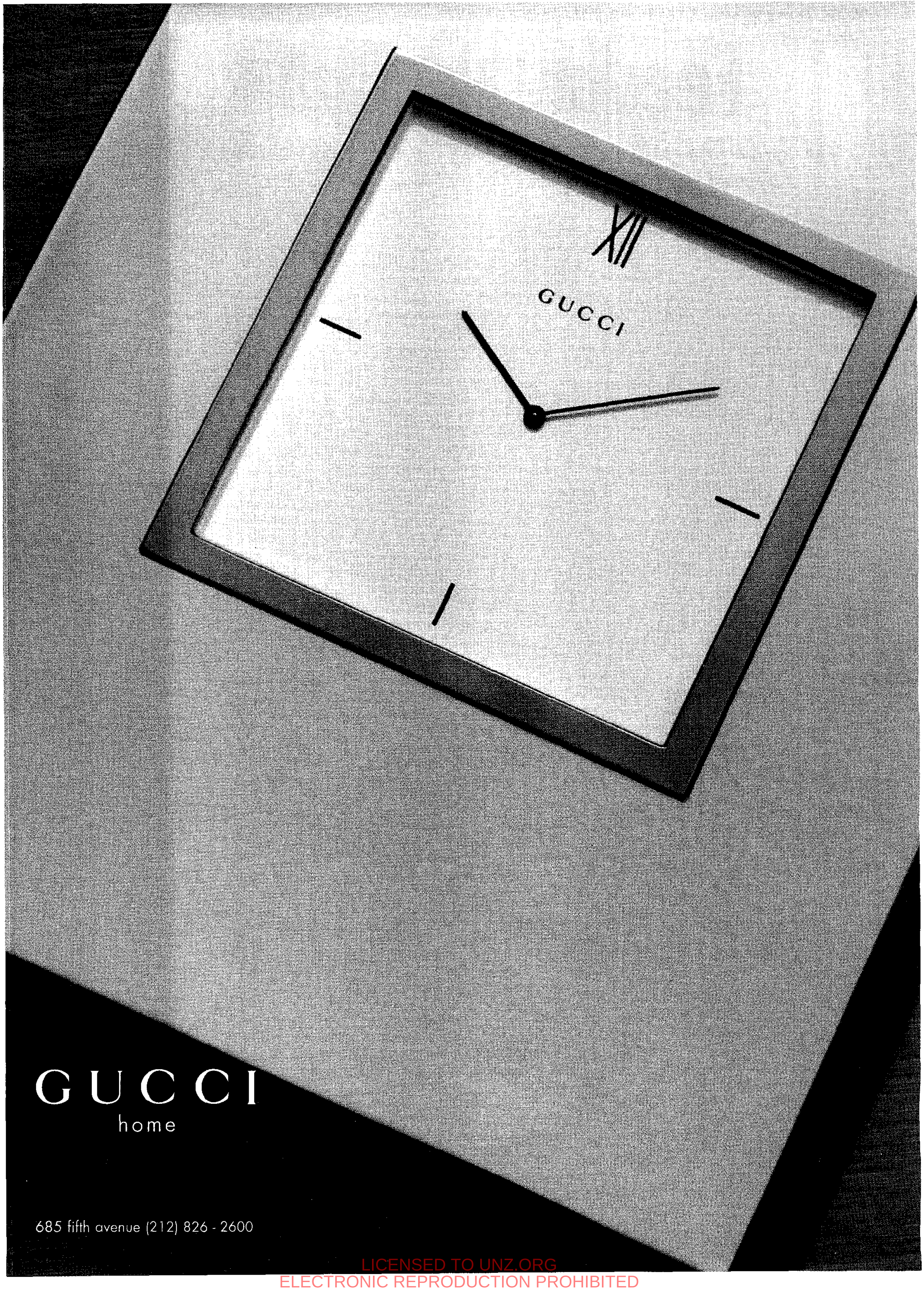
"One time, me and my friend, we was just racing, and the cops stopped us," he told the group. "Why were you running?" another boy asked suspiciously. "We just felt like racing," Khaliq retorted, suddenly on the defensive. " 'Don't run' is a pretty good rule," Morris said. Childhood exuberance can be a liability in some parts of the city.

"All of the kids in this program come here for after-school tutoring," Selassie, the youth-development coordinator, said later. "They're smart and very highly motivated, but as you can see, they all have stories about being stopped by police."

"I find every time I go to one of these, I learn more than they do," Morris said. "Like what it's like to be a target of the police. Their stories are always about walking down the street and suddenly they're up against a car."

Armando, 17, goes to the Manhattan Center for Science and Mathematics. He's never been arrested, either, but he's been stopped at least four times. "I know how to act around them," he said. "I never mouth off. They're just looking for guns anyways." Armando picked up the basics from his older brothers: Don't argue when they stop you; answer only the basic questions of name, address, and age, and then shut up.

"I'm gonna start teaching it to my younger sister," he said. "It's about time she learned." TRISTRAM KORTEN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ALEX WILLIAMS

Feeding the Bull

The capital-gains-tax cut—long a pet issue of the money class—has suddenly become a populist crusade in Washington, and New York might stand to profit most of all.

THE OLD CAPITAL-GAINS-TAX CUT used to be one of those issues that had true believers lining up on either side—the evangelical supply-siders who saw it as the unshackling of the great American economy and the old-line liberals convinced that it's just charity for the rich. As with many things political these days, however, the traditional ideological barriers have crumbled, and in this year's budgetary free-for-all, Congress just may sign off on such a cut. Years ago, this might have set off alarms among the city's Democratic elite, but there are few signs of panic now, perhaps because prominent New Yorkers have come to realize that a capital-gains-tax cut might be the first good thing Washington has done for New York City in years.

All the usual reasons for opposing the cut remain. It is, after all, a scheme that helps the rich get richer. A staggering one half of all capital gains—profits reaped on sales of stock, real estate, art, and so forth—accrue to the nation's richest one percent.

But the percentage of Americans owning stock has doubled in seven years. So, like the direction of the Dow Jones Industrial Average, traditionally patrician obsessions like capital-gains taxes are becoming populist concerns. Middle-class investors are beginning to think that it doesn't much matter what kind of windfalls Warren Buffett might get selling off $5 million worth of stock, so long as they don't get "gouged" when they cash out their $5,000 mutual-fund accounts.

Immediately following a cap-gains cut, there would probably be a big sell-off, since some investors are clearly waiting to cash out. The Dow might dip a bit. But few dispute that eventually, much of this money would flow back. And almost certainly, the cut would prolong Wall Street's six-year bull market, enriching New York's securities industry and related businesses.

"The capital-gains-tax cut is good news for the financial industry, and since New York is the capital of that, New York will benefit where other places will not," says Glenn Hubbard, an economics professor at Columbia Business School, a former tax specialist in the Bush Treasury Department, and a supporter of the cut.

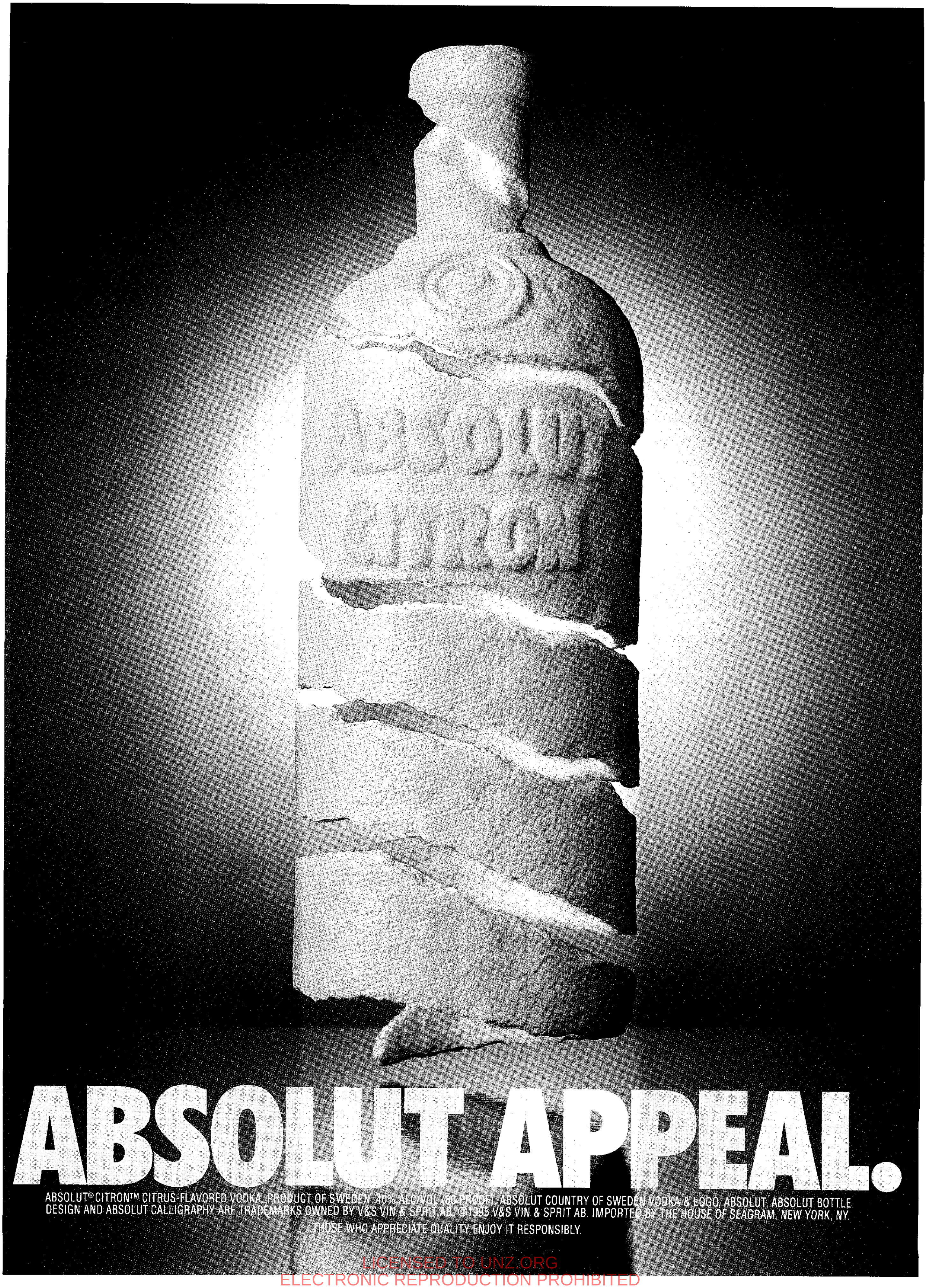
Certainly, New York's economic fortunes are more tied to Wall Street than ever. Since 1991, securities-industry salaries and bonuses have grown from 9.9 percent of all income in New York to 13.6 percent (that is, traders, brokers, and investment bankers accounted for $19.1 billion of a $140.7 billion pie). The ongoing stock-market boom has sent traders on Lamborghini-buying binges the city hasn't seen since 1987. Jobs in the securities industry have grown from 128,800 since 1991 to 151,000 last year. City Hall has also shared in the take: At $11 billion, security-industry profits doubled official projections for 1996, leaving the city with a $450 million tax windfall.

This is all very good news for a New York City economy that, despite modest growth last year, remains pretty wobbly. Last year, government employment dropped by 9,000 jobs, while the manufacturing sector lost 5,000. White-collar professions are hardly safe, either. Mitchell Moss, head of New York University's Urban Research Center, points out that 9,000 jobs have been lost since '93 in commercial banking, with big declines also registered by the insurance industry. "New York should thank God we have a securities industry that's dynamic and innovative," says Moss. "It's more important now than ever."

And it's an industry that the city will count on for future growth. "The capital-gains cut will be another device to attract people into the financial markets," Moss speculates. "We'll just see more money, and therefore more brains and more invention. We had the derivatives in the eighties, and we'll have some new version in the nineties."

THE CAPITAL-GAINS TAX DATES from 1921, when, during a deep postwar recession caused by a shortage of capital, Congress decided to distinguish investment income from work income—and tax the former at a lower rate. Over the years, the cap-gains tax has gone up and down—it doubled under Nixon in 1969—but it always remained lower than the income tax until 1986. Then, in a watershed tax deal, Senators Bill Bradley and George Mitchell brokered a compromise with the Reagan White

Illustration by Stephen Kroninger.



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THOSE WHO APPRECIATE QUALITY ENJOY IT RESPONSIBLY.

House, accepting a reduction of the top rate on income from 50 to 28 percent in exchange for hiking the capital-gains rate from 20 to 28 percent. Under Bush and Clinton, the income tax has inched up (the top rate now stands at 40 percent), while the cap-gains tax has held steady.

Since then, capital gains has been a rallying cry of flat-taxers, *Wall Street Journal* editorialists, and other free-market boosters like supply-side guru Jude Wanniski, who has raised the debate to spiritual levels. Amid the current political paralysis, the GOP senses an opening. The latest Republican proposal on the Hill is to slash the top cap-gains rate from 28 to 19.8. Reading Bill Clinton on the matter is, as usual, an exercise in graduate-level hermeneutics. Clinton and his Treasury secretary, Robert Rubin, have long resisted an across-the-board capital-gains cut—the kind that would be especially remunerative for Wall Street—in favor of targeted cuts that benefit homeowners, small-business operators, and long-term stockholders.

The trouble for the president is that, in lieu of money for social programs, he wants to forge a domestic agenda out of a few choice tax breaks. Clinton's favorite is a $10,000-per-family college-education write-off that Republicans will surely block if they don't get something meaningful in return—like you-know-what. An across-the-board cap-gains cut may just be a bargaining chip that Clinton wouldn't mind tossing Trent Lott's way, if that's what it takes to pass the 1997 budget. In any case, Clinton shouldn't really mind throwing a bone to Wall Street. After all, two years of near-30 percent returns on the Standard & Poor's 500 did the president no harm in running for his second term.

Local politicians hardly seem transfixed by the issue. While Alfonse D'Amato has shown healthy partisan support for the cut, Moynihan has historically been opposed, though he shows signs that he could be persuaded. "The senator has pointed out inequitable distribution of broad-based cuts," says his press aide Brian Mathey. "He has said in the past that there is a persuasive case that a cut in capital gains realized from home sales, not stock sales, might be more sensible than a broad cut. But he's waiting until hearings take place."

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own businesses over the past two years. "There's been a steady, strong increase in demand in upper-end wines over the last few years, because of Wall Street and people who've made money in the stock market," says Ian Ribowsky, president of Paramount Brands, a Westchester-based wine wholesaler. "You would see the upper end of the wine business fall off if there was a dramatic drop in the Dow, like we did in 1987."

Nobody wants to see that, of course, and a cap-gains-tax cut would seem a propitious way to push the threat of a crash a bit further into the distance. But detractors caution that the cut would prop up a Dow already perched at precarious and artificial heights. And some in New York doubt the far-reaching effects of the securities industry. "It's hard to imagine Wall Street doing any better than it is right now, and there's *no* trickle-down effect at all," says Doug Henwood, publisher of the *Left Business Observer*. "The latest New York State comptroller's report on wage growth shows that *all* the city's income growth is coming out of just Wall Street."

Henwood has a point. Even within the high-finance industry, entry- and mid-level jobs have been on the decline for years as investment banks ship back-office operations out of the city. And Wall Street's good fortune has not crossed the river to the Bronx, where the unemployment rate has passed 12 percent, or to Brooklyn, where it tops 11 percent. New York's 9.9 percent unemployment rate and 2.95 percent inflation rate rank the city as one of the weaker urban economies in the country, according to a recent city comptroller's report.

Howard Chernick, an economist at Hunter College, opposes a cap-gains cut on the grounds that it would benefit not just the rich, but the even less deserving industry of tax specialists and loophole seekers. "More than half the complexity in the tax code is related to cap gains," he says. "As soon as you create differences in the rate of taxation of different types of income, you create incentive to receive income in that form. There are many, many ways to do that, and that's what the lawyers and accountants are so ingenious at. It all spawns litigation and so forth. It's a very powerful complexity-enhancer."

Still, even Chernick has to concede that New York stands to profit. "A capital-gains-tax cut is very bad in terms of efficient allocation of resources," he says, "but with all of our fancy accountants, it's probably not bad for New York." ▬

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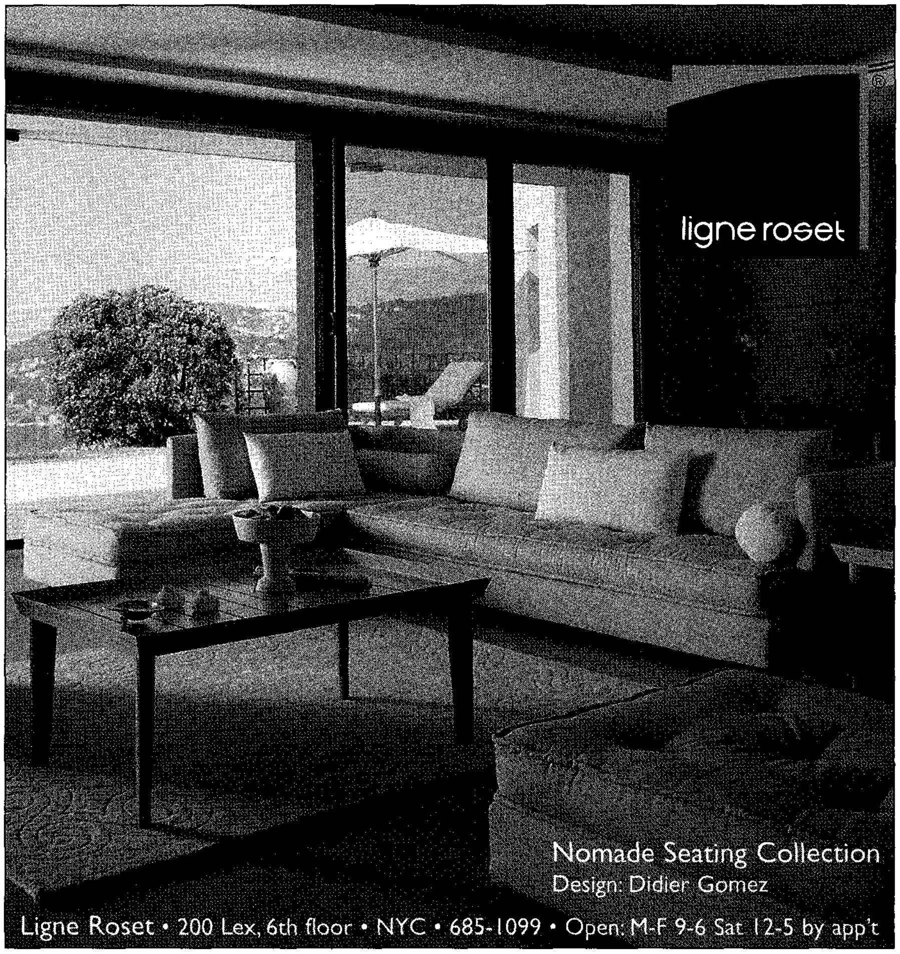
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DAVID ELLIS

Not Necessarily the News

The self-proclaimed news network of the future, MSNBC makes NBC look sharp. But so far, the superslick venture has been better at buzz than at reinventing the news.

REMEMBER THE LAST revolution in television network news? It happened in the early eighties, when Roone Arledge, the swashbuckling former head of ABC Sports, juiced up the network's moribund news division with colorful graphics, fast-paced stories, and signature programs hosted by big-money journalists. That reshaping of ABC News, considered heretical, helped the network dominate broadcast news for fifteen years—and was cited in all the laudatory stories about Arledge when he was kicked up the corporate ladder two weeks ago. It's a programming transformation worth keeping in mind before dismissing the self-proclaimed next wave in TV journalism: MSNBC, the $500 million venture launched by Microsoft and GE that promises to be the "future of news."

MSNBC talking heads: Brian Williams, Richard Stengel, and Soledad O'Brien.

Arledge certainly isn't dismissing it. He admits that NBC's new cable venture has given that network a singular boost. "NBC has done a terrific job of packaging their stuff to make it look like they have more resources than they do," he told the New York *Times*. "MSNBC gives them a dimension they don't have with just the network."

From its debut last July, MSNBC has promoted itself as a younger, hipper CNN. The network tag line, "It's time to get connected," is coupled with incessant plugs for a companion Internet news service staffed by 100 journalists. The traditional anchor desk has been abandoned for a funky chrome-and-brick workspace where casually dressed daytime anchors schmooze several times daily with MSNBC's "contributors"—a diverse set of young talking heads.

Mark Harrington, MSNBC's vice-president and general manager, describes the network as an on-air experiment. "There are plenty of people who give speeches about what will happen in the future. The fact is that we're doing it on cable and the Internet every day," he says. "Computers and television are coming together somehow, and we're wrestling with that editorially now."

What's unclear is exactly how we stand to gain from this supposedly revolutionary union of computers and television. Talk to people at MSNBC, and you'll hear the postmodern vocabulary of "repurposing" journalism and "extending the brand name" of NBC News onto new "platforms." In truth, MSNBC's heralded Internet site—a news summary accompanied by lifestyle features and programming plugs—is at the moment hard to navigate and can't really be considered a stand-alone information resource. The real product generated by the channel right now is buzz, a perception that NBC News—already the home of the No. 1 network evening newscast—is confidently moving forward into the future.

No doubt, the slick look of the set does seem to promise great things to come: Computer monitors rise and descend; an on-set espresso machine places us firmly in the nineties. "Overnight, they've made CNN look like a low-rent operation again," notes Andrew Tyndall, publisher of *The Tyndall Report*, an industry newsletter. MSNBC could well be the video equivalent of *USA Today*. Like the Nation's Newspaper, it has come up with a visually appealing way of presenting the news that may be first condemned, then shamelessly imitated in the scramble for a new audience. (The quickly shelved 1988 venture *USA Today: The Television Show* did not work as well as its paper counterpart.)

One of the least edifying innovations of MSNBC is found in its roster of approximately 25 daytime contributors, the brainchild of NBC News president Andrew Lack. They're social critics who are smart, young, attractive, and well dressed (the men are encouraged not to wear ties) and talk about the news as it happens. A rainbow coalition of colors and political shadings—including button-down *Wall Street Journal* editorialist John Fund; thoughtful African-American businesswoman Judidh Aidoo; and reflexively cynical Lawrence O'Donnell Jr., a former Democratic Senate staff member—the contributors pop up periodically in trios throughout the day, often to wrestle with subjects they may have never thought about before. "I did ten minutes on Girl Scout cookies the other day," laughs MSNBC contributor Eric Alterman, a columnist for *The Nation* (and, ironically, author of *Sound and Fury: The Nation Punditocracy and the Collapse of American Politics*) who is just as likely to be called on to share his views on air-safety regulations, abortion, or global warming.

Not surprisingly, the sessions often play like MTV's *The Real World*, as if set in a Washington, D.C., group house. (What

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TV PG

do you get when you combine a GOP-friendly journalist, a Democratic activist, and an investment banker with a social conscience?) Just about the only thing missing from all this is the background sound of milk being steamed at the espresso machine. One key difference between these correspondents and their *Real World* counterparts: On MSNBC, you won't hear anyone say, "How should I know?" (The concept of the chummy kaffeeklatchers seems inspired by another prime-time sitcom success—off air, group members have ironically called themselves the "MSNBC Friends" ever since a producer described them that way.)

If you occasionally get the impression that the contributors are young people acting out on a national stage, that may be exactly the point. "Being on MSNBC is like having your parents finally listen to your opinions at the dinner table," says Richard Stengel, a *Time* magazine editor who serves as a moderating presence on the panel. "And it sure beats working."

Harrington sees the contributors as "electronic columnists who are empowered to give their opinions freely on the air." While it's refreshing that the contributors haven't learned to prepackage their opinions—and do represent a broader spectrum of opinions than you're likely to find on established talk shows—some express themselves in flaming language never before heard on network news. A lot of the fury comes from Ann Coulter, a 30-year-old conservative who's become the poster girl for the militia crowd. Coulter, a former staff member for Michigan Republican senator Spencer Abraham, has used MSNBC's airwaves to cite Bill Clinton's re-election as evidence Americans "love white trash," wondered why GOP leaders were too timid to publicly call the president "lying scum" for demagoguing on Medicare cuts, and averred that she could understand the motivations of abortion-clinic bombers since Republican Supreme Court appointees have "gone south" on restricting reproductive rights. Say this for MSNBC—at such moments it delivers on its prelaunch promise to provide "the kind of dynamic discussion of topical events often found only on talk radio." But most talk radio doesn't try to pass itself off as a news source.

If MSNBC is, in fact, the news network of the future, we may have to soften our definition of what constitutes news. MSNBC actually begins its day with a simulcast of Don Imus's radio show before giving way to the tra-

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ditional menu of news updates and feature stories. At night, the network switches to softer programming that's as much Lifetime as it is CNN. The evening lineup includes *The Site,* a daily look at the Internet; *InterNight,* an interview show; *Time & Again,* a repackaging of the network-news archives; and *Remember This?,* a quiz show with the overexposed Al Roker.

To be fair, that evening lineup also includes *The News* with Brian Williams, an hourlong newscast featuring NBC's former White House correspondent. With Williams onboard, MSNBC has proved capable of deftly covering breaking news. Just three days after the network went on air, TWA Flight 800 crashed into the waters off southern Long Island as Williams began his evening report. The network quickly went on air with those now-familiar images of flames on the ocean surface, shot by a helicopter dispatched by affiliate WNBC. Williams ably ad-libbed for hours, handily beating CNN on the big story.

But since then, MSNBC has fashioned a mixed record on breaking events. Particularly weak was their early coverage of the long-anticipated death of Deng Xiaoping: While CNN provided comprehensive coverage on Deng's life, MSNBC's Beijing correspondent repeatedly advised viewers that it was the middle of the night and no one knew anything.

MSNBC has the luxury of making its mistakes before a small audience. Though it will be wired into 35 million homes by the end of April, its slot is usually high—in Manhattan, it's on channel 54, the cable equivalent of Death Valley. Early audience estimates indicate that only 30,000 to 100,000 people are watching in any given prime-time hour, compared with CNN's nighttime audience of 500,000.

It's ironic that the biggest dud on the MSNBC schedule is *The Site,* its Internet news magazine. Since there's only about ten minutes' worth of real news about the Internet every week, the show is forced to repackage the same story repeatedly. Channel surfers one recent evening were treated to this content-free spectacle: cappuccino-sipping host Soledad O'Brien interviewing *The Site*'s Website manager, who called up the host's own electronic column to the screen, allowing viewers at home to both read and hear her laments that there was no new information in her column. At that moment, MSNBC double-clicked itself into a perfect news vacuum. ■

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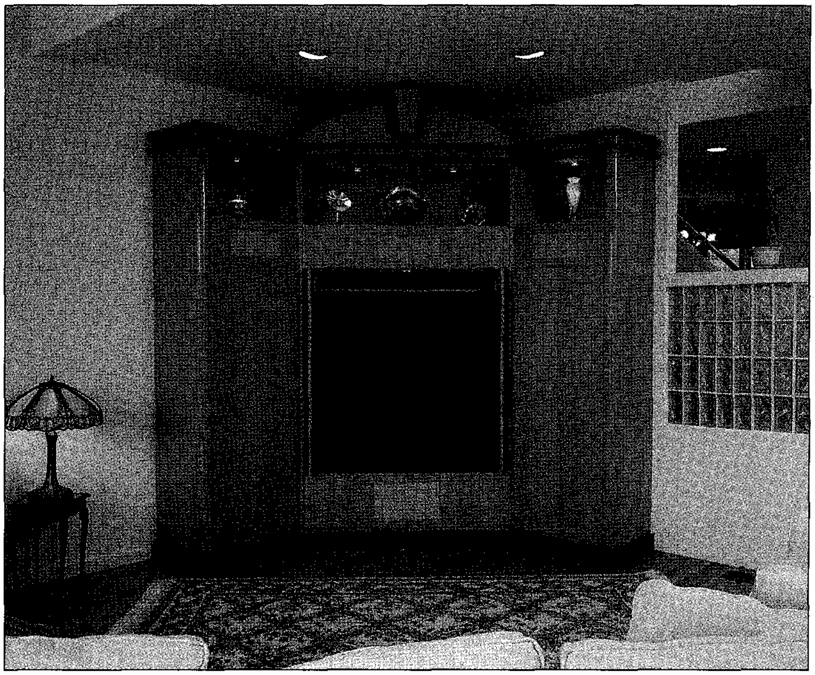

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Shine
Fargo
The English Patient
Secrets & Lies
Jerry Maguire

BEST DIRECTOR

Anthony Minghella
Mike Leigh
Milos Forman
Scott Hicks
Joel Coen

BEST ACTRESS

Kristin Scott Thomas
Diane Keaton
Frances McDormand
Brenda Blethyn
Emily Watson

BEST ACTOR

Tom Cruise
Woody Harrelson
Geoffrey Rush
Ralph Fiennes
Billy Bob Thornton

BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS

Barbara Hershey
Joan Allen
Lauren Bacall
Juliette Binoche
Marianne Jean-Baptiste

BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR

Cuba Gooding Jr.
Edward Norton
Armin Mueller-Stahl
William H. Macy
James Woods

HANDICAPPING THE OSCARS

Clockwise from top left: Fiennes, Forman, Thornton, Scott Thomas.

PICTURE Very long, weepy films traditionally do well, but only up to a point: More than twelve tearful minutes will blow it for even the longest film (viz. *The Color Purple*, *The Prince of Tides*), so rule out *Shine* (14 minutes) and *Secrets & Lies* (24½ minutes). Also: no pigs. It didn't work for *Babe;* it won't work for *Larry Flynt*. *The English Patient* and *Shine* are tied in Vegas. We say: *English*, 3:1.

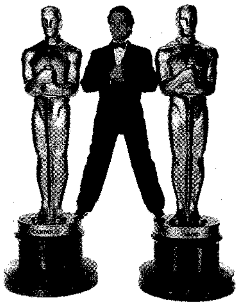
DIRECTOR Directors with dogs' names never win; ask Lasse Hallstrom or Spike Lee. Of course, this year no dog-named directors were nominated, so you're on your own there. *The English Patient* is long and sad and boasts a desert, a war, and several impressive cheekbones—making Anthony Minghella the favorite of Vegas oddsmakers. But we say no one's *ever* named a dog Milos. It's Forman, 2:1.

ACTRESS Ordinarily one bets on whoever's weathered the most snubs—it's a little thing called paying your dues, dear—but this time the category comprises four newcomers and a previous winner, so go by the accent. Rule out Blethyn's cockney abomination; ditto for McDormand's Minnesota drawl. Watson's accent is elegant, but no one's seen her movie (*Breaking the Waves*—surfing flick, right?). Oddsmakers say: Even money for Thomas. Go for it.

ACTOR Cruise has the best hair, by a mile, but clean-cut businessmen aren't the kind of characters on which virtuoso performances are built. Fiennes's performance features the impressive combination of good hair and third-degree burns, but Vegas is giving even money on Rush and Thornton. We say: Thornton, for sheer novelty.

SUPPORTING ACTRESS Veterans and survivors always win, which means Bacall's got it sewn up: She's the oldest, and she acted opposite Barbra. Vegas says: Bacall, 1:1. We say: 3:1.

SUPPORTING ACTOR Age or racial diversity wins; people named Armin lose. Vegas says: Even money on Gooding. We say: 2:1.

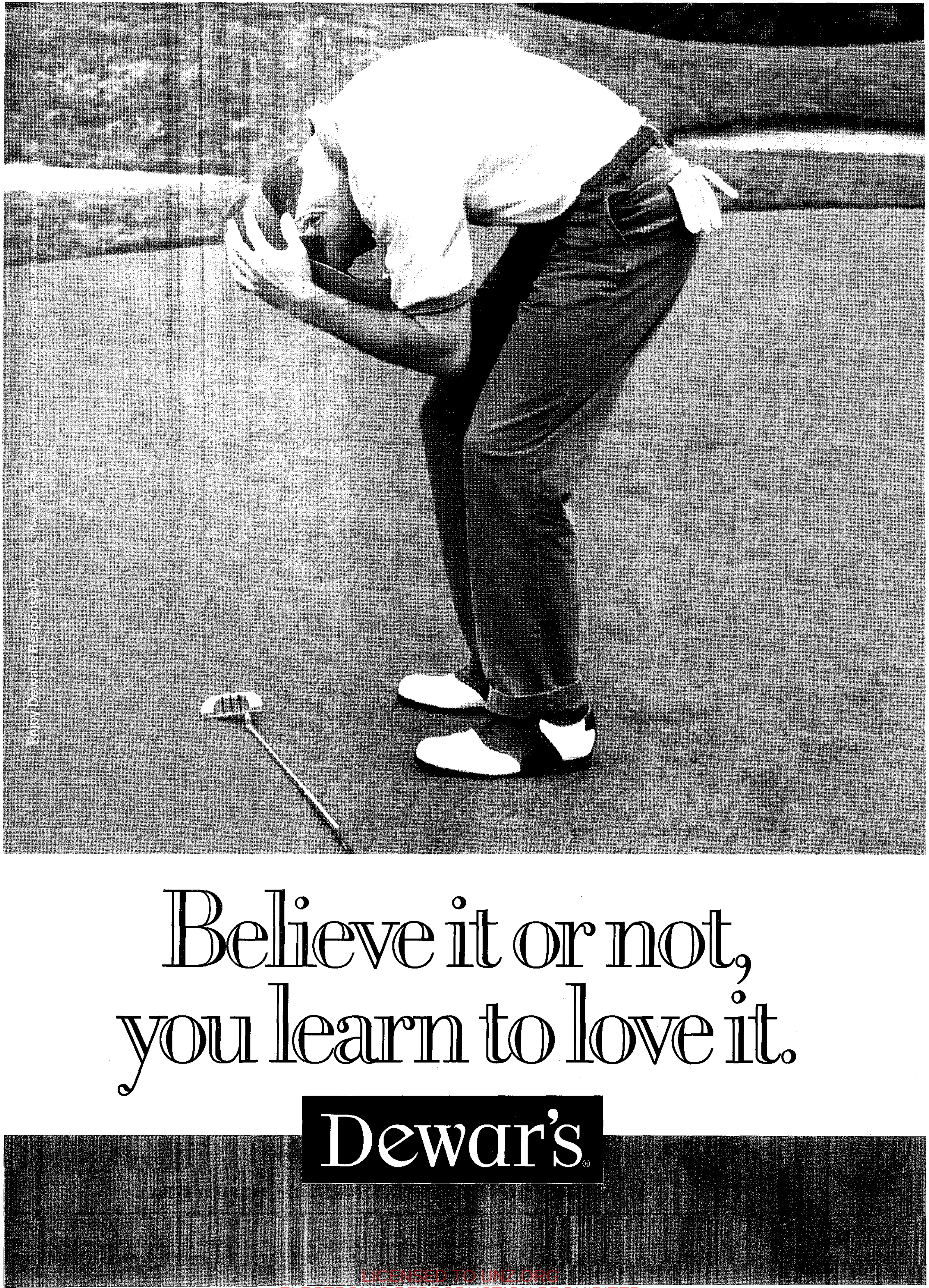


Handicapping the Monologue

What comedic delights will Billy Crystal deliver? The current odds:

1:1	Lincoln Bedroom joke with "show me the money" punch line
3:1	"You look maaaavelous," spoken in a Minnesota accent
6:1	Joke about cloning the Coen brothers
15:1	The all-consuming-power-of-Howard Stern joke
20:1	The all-consuming-power-of-George Lucas joke
25:1	The all-consuming-power-of-L. Ron Hubbard joke
50:1	Anything either controversial or funny

Photographs: from top to bottom, left to right, Phil Bray/Miramax; Sidney Baldwin/Columbia/TriStar; Phil Bray/Miramax; Michael Yarish/Miramax; Arthur Grace/Sygma.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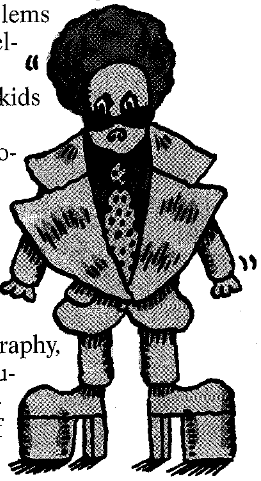
ROBBED!

LOVE	MADONNA	STREISAND	REYNOLDS
ROLE: An obnoxious, amoral junkie married to a drug-addicted low-culture genius.	**ROLE:** A marginally talented megalomaniac who first patronizes, then betrays her fans.	**ROLE:** A woman who's obsessed with her appearance and decides that she's gorgeous.	**ROLE:** The gracefully aging mother of a neurotic Jewish funnyman.
REASON FOR SNUB: She was acting?	**REASON FOR SNUB:** No, really, she was acting?	**REASON FOR SNUB:** Stretch, Babs!	**REASON FOR SNUB:** Couldn't she at least have dyed her hair?

WRITE YOUR OWN CONTENDER

Attention, filmmakers! Keep this Academy-friendly tip sheet—meticulously distilled from this year's nominees—close at hand as you work up your next treatment.

1. Use foreign accents. If unavailable, regional American dialects will suffice.
2.. When possible, cast actors with a discernible lack of orthodontic work.
3. Disabilities are very hot; disfigurement is good, too.
4. Remember, psychological problems allow for maximum character development.
5. Syringes sure are big with the kids these days.
6. Wide lapels make even short people look hip.
7. Excessive bleeding never gets old.
8. Plaid recalls a happier time.
9. Wheelchairs and landscaping equipment can be surprisingly effective props.
10. If your film is a dramatized biography, you may gloss over unimportant occupational details such as Nazi collaboration or female objectification if your lead looks good in underwear.



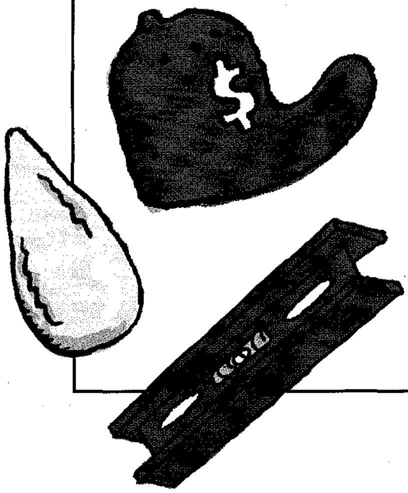
CAUSE DU JOUR!

Hollywood abhors an unadorned lapel. But AIDS is cured (well, almost), apartheid's fixed, and breast cancer—be fair—has had its turn. Some possible replacement issues and their appropriate accessories:

CAUSE: Sweatshop workers
PIN: Lucite sweat drop

CAUSE: Balanced-budget amendment
PIN: Carpenter's level

CAUSE: Baseball salary cap
PIN: Tiny baseball cap



Weekend at Swifty's

Swifty Lazar, the original superagent, enjoyed many years as undisputed king of the post-Oscar Hollywood party. Now that the king is dead, five challengers vie for his glittering crown.

1. THE *VANITY FAIR* PARTY AT MORTON'S: Nothing reeks of power and success like steak and perfume-drenched magazines.
WHAT YOU MIGHT SEE: Ovitz and Katzenberg dissolving into weepy embrace.
WHAT YOU WON'T SEE: Billy Bob Thornton's friends and neighbors.

2. THE MIRAMAX PARTY AT MONDRIAN: The independent-seeming Disney subsidiary and its friends with daring facial hair.
WHAT YOU MIGHT SEE: Ewan McGregor singing backup for Iggy Pop's surprise acoustic set.
WHAT YOU WON'T SEE: Ovitz and Katzenberg.

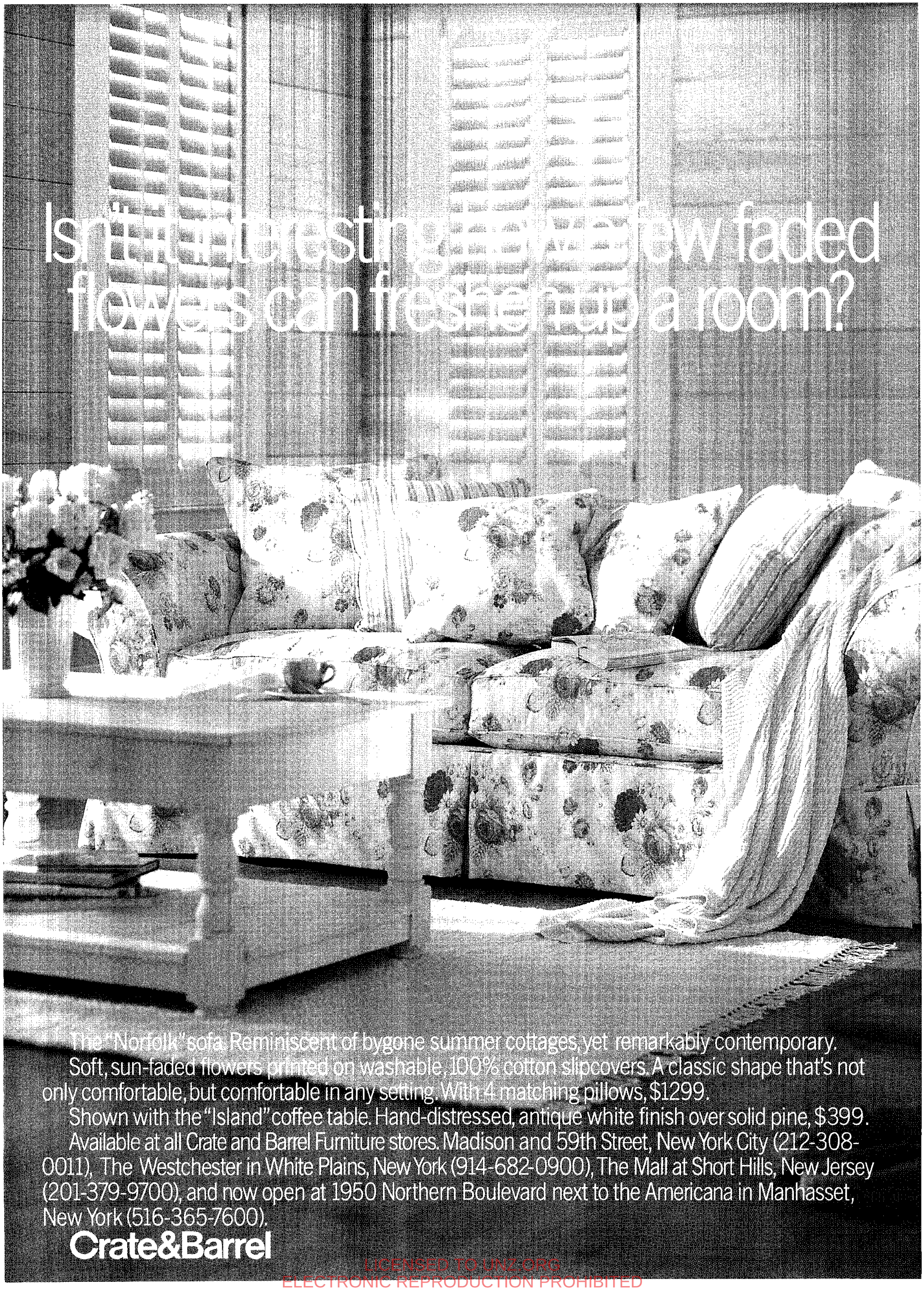
3. THE GOVERNOR'S BALL: The longest-running and most straitlaced of Oscar-night shindigs, in a tent outside the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion.
WHAT YOU MIGHT SEE: Jack Palance stopping, dropping, and giving twenty.
WHAT YOU WON'T SEE: The governor.

4. DANI JANSSEN'S PARTY: And for Most Coveted Invitation, the winner is . . .
WHAT YOU MIGHT SEE: Anjelica Huston bobbing for beluga.
WHAT YOU WON'T SEE: Anyone who's not a frighteningly powerful personal friend of Janssen's.

5. ELTON JOHN'S PARTY AT MAPLE DRIVE: Two words: Rocket Man.
WHAT YOU MIGHT SEE: Winners and losers singing "I'm Still Standing" into the wee hours.
WHAT YOU WON'T SEE: Fur, Republicans, furry Republicans.

BY DAVE EGGERS, DAVE MOODIE, ZEV BOROW, LANCE CRAPO, AND MARNY REQUA.

Photographs: clockwise from top left, Sydney Baldwin/Columbia /TriStar; David Appleby/Hollywood Pictures; David James/Columbia/TriStar; Elliott Marks/Paramount; Kelly Jordan/Sygma.


Isn't it interesting how a few faded flowers can freshen up a room?

The "Norfolk" sofa. Reminiscent of bygone summer cottages, yet remarkably contemporary.

Soft, sun-faded flowers printed on washable, 100% cotton slipcovers. A classic shape that's not only comfortable, but comfortable in any setting. With 4 matching pillows, $1299.

Shown with the "Island" coffee table. Hand-distressed, antique white finish over solid pine, $399.

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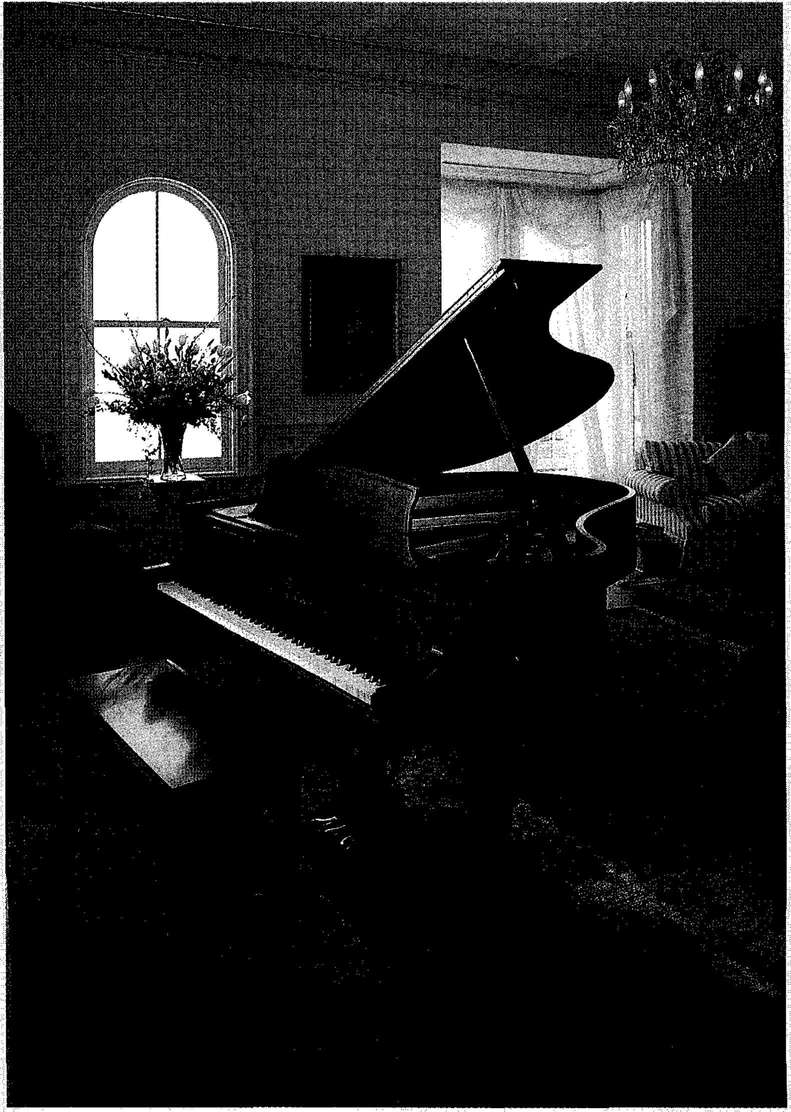

SPRING DESIGN 1997

IN THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, INTERIOR DESIGN HAS taken its place alongside Prozac, single-malt Scotch, and four-course meals at the Union Square Café as an opiate of the overclass and its wannabes. We are always poised to upgrade, whether we're browsing paintings, coffee tables, or decorators. Some spaces *are* to die for: A prewar co-op turned Space Age bachelor's loft (and for a family, no less). Richly tricked-out, pillow-strewn rooms fit for a pasha. A tiny studio crammed with chinoiserie. Two edgy living rooms—one with a tree growing through it, the other with faces painted into the resin floor. We reveal the hottest unknown (but not for long) furniture designer. Where the Lafayette-strip dealers get their period merch. And the most stunning ergonomic chair—no longer a contradiction in terms.

By Rene Chun

Produced by **Jordan Schaps**

Edited by **Phoebe Eaton**

Associate Producer **Michael Green**

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FURNITURE
HANK'S ALLEY
QUALITY ANTIQUES
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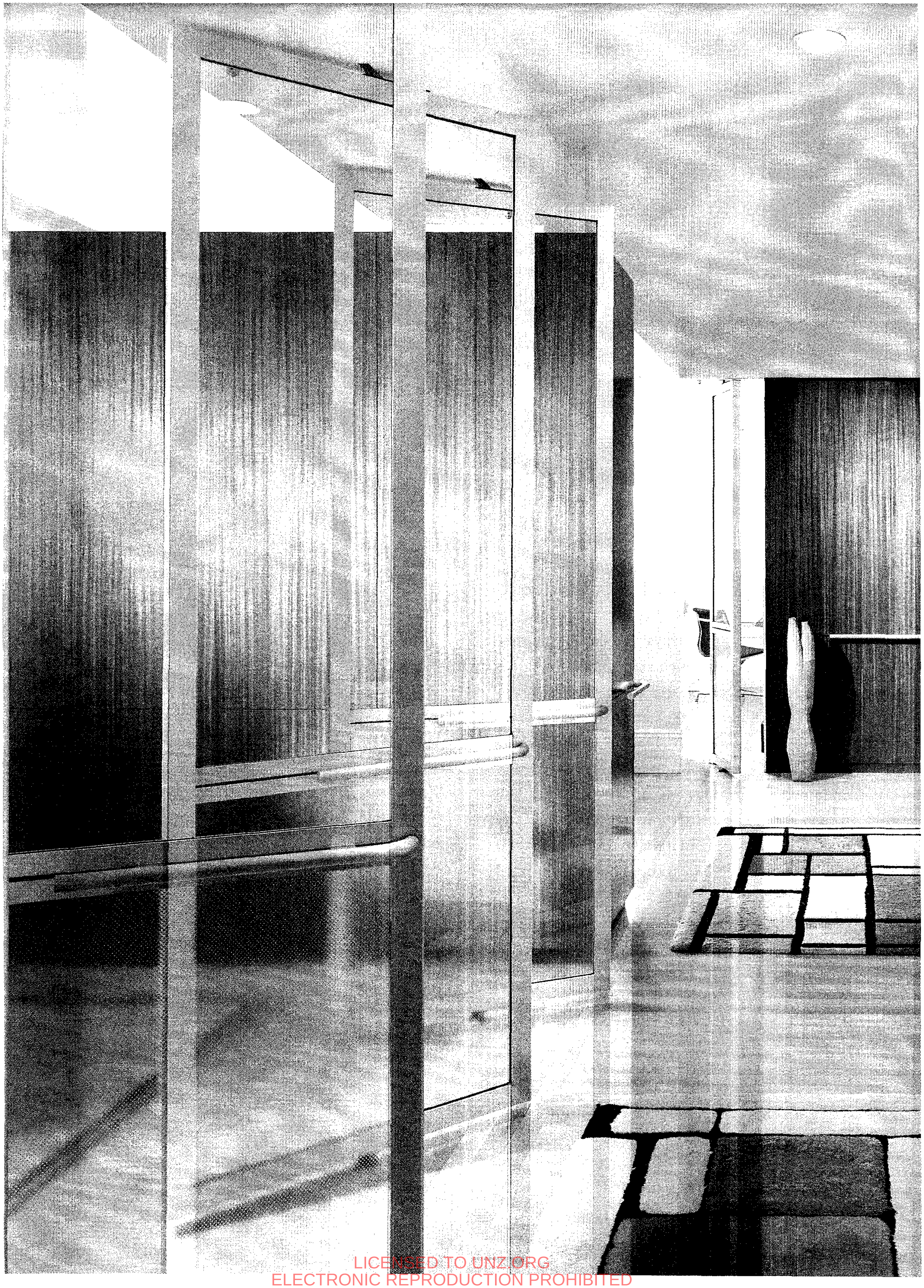
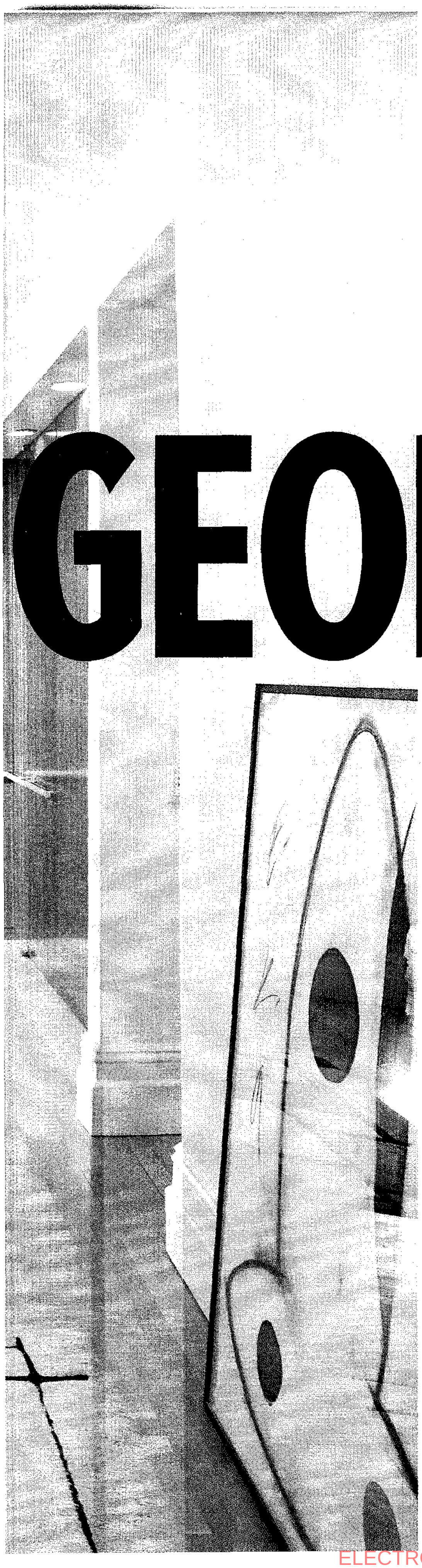


SOLID GEOMETRY



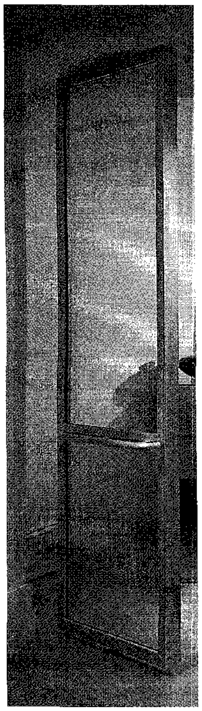
Is it Maxwell Smart's pied-à-terre? The Bauhaus wing at MoMA? Prewar meets postwar on Central Park West.

THE MIES GENERATION **Mahogany paneling** was the **modernist way** to update this prewar co-op. The clients requested traditional French doors, but the architects talked them into going **high-tech.** A ceramic sculpture **standing sentry** in the hallway is from Lin-Weinberg.

STYLED BY CARLOS MOTA

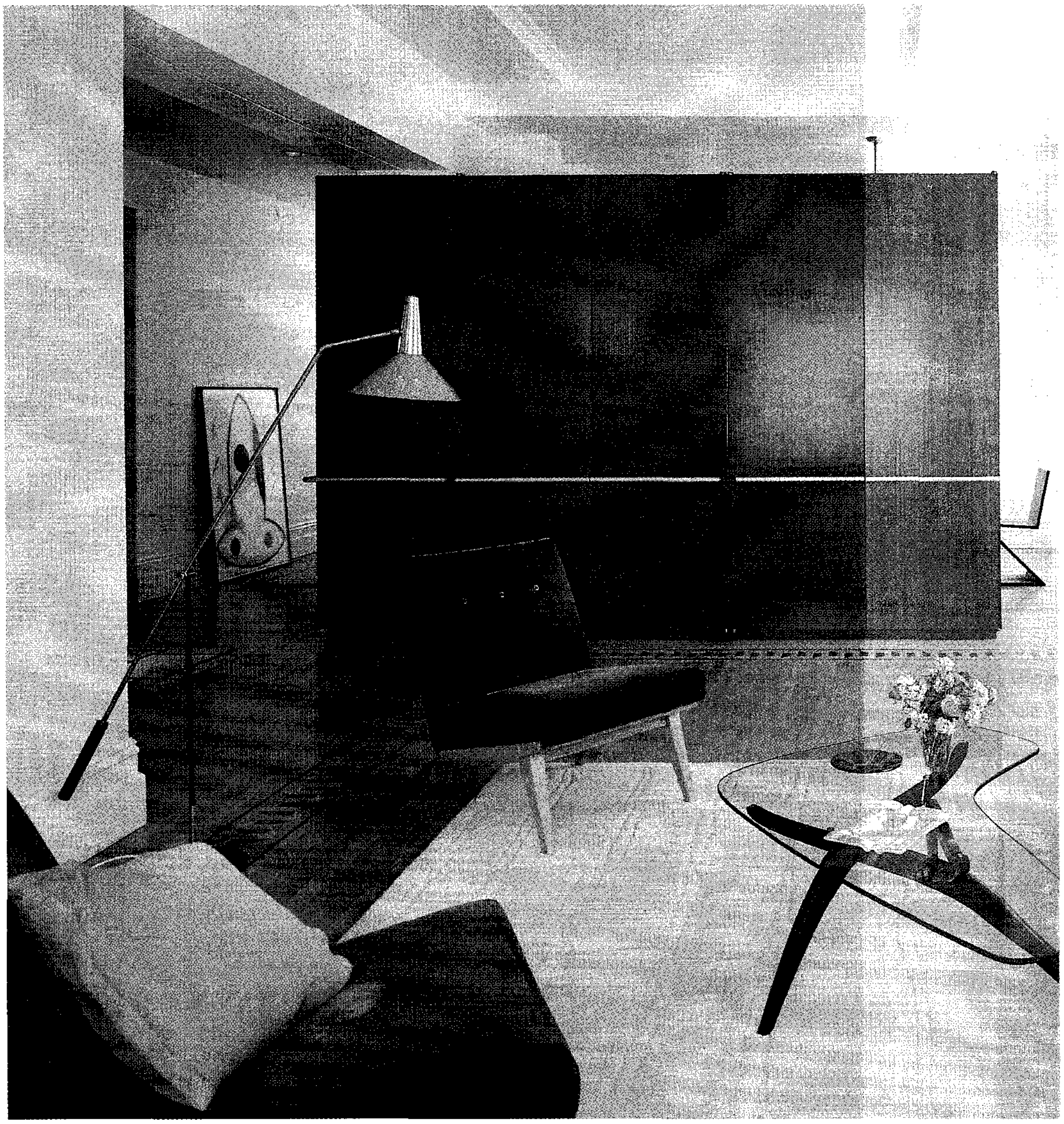
"MIESIAN, BUT WITH A TWIST" IS HOW ARCHItects Joel Sanders and Marc Tsurumaki describe this prewar co-op at Central Park West's Turin, reincarnated as an elegant loftlike space. In keeping with the resurgence of Esquivel's lounge music and Space Age bachelor-pad furniture, the architectural design team didn't pore over Bauhaus archival blueprints but drew inspiration from a floor plan published in a 1956 *Playboy* entitled *"Playboy's* Penthouse Apartment for a Bachelor." ■ "The *Playboy* apartment featured pivoting doors that could be opened for entertaining or closed for privacy," says Marc Tsurumaki. To fulfill Hefner's schematic, three glass doors permit the dining room to be sealed off from the kitchen and adjacent nursery—the irony is that an investment-banking couple with a child live here. ■ For the

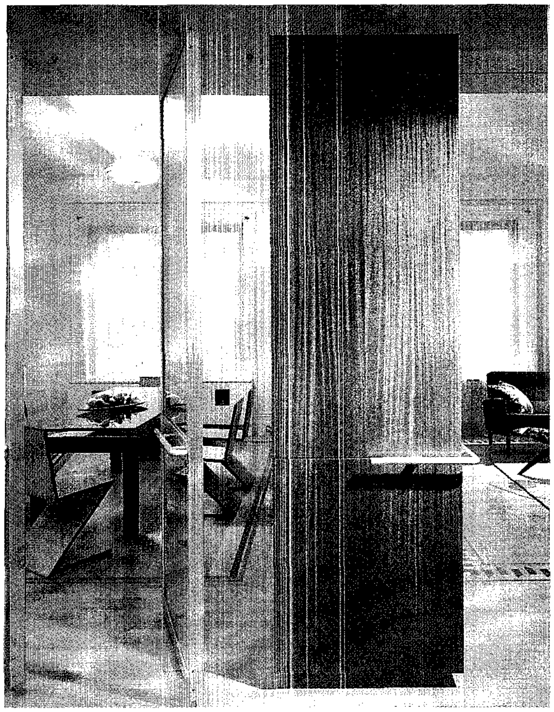
PHOTOGRAPHED BY PETER AARON

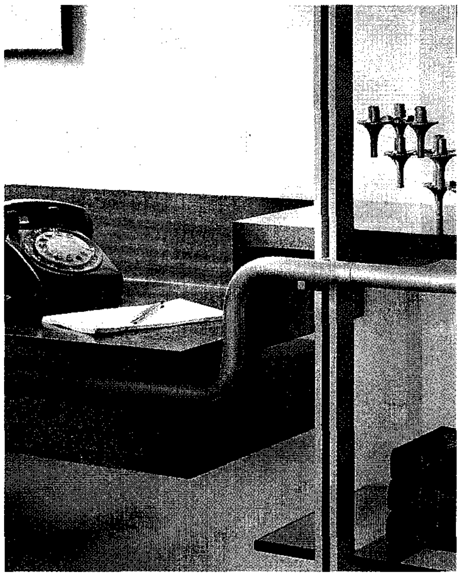


two young architects (both on faculty at Parsons), the commission reflects their attitude toward the city's Edith Wharton–era buildings. Joel Sanders explains: "In the sixties and seventies, these old apartments were routinely gutted. In the eighties, meticulous restorations were all the rage. Today, the trend is to respect the existing prewar shell but introduce a modernist vocabulary that creates a rich dialogue between old and new." Translation: Parquet floors, plaster walls, and moldings would be preserved. Custom mahogany paneling, glass doors, and a network of aluminum-and-glass bookshelves would be cobbled in. ■ Any advice for those contemplating their own prewar renovation? Tsurumaki: "Respect the apartment's bone structure, but don't get nostalgic." Sanders: "Knock down some walls. People today don't need servants' quarters and a pantry."

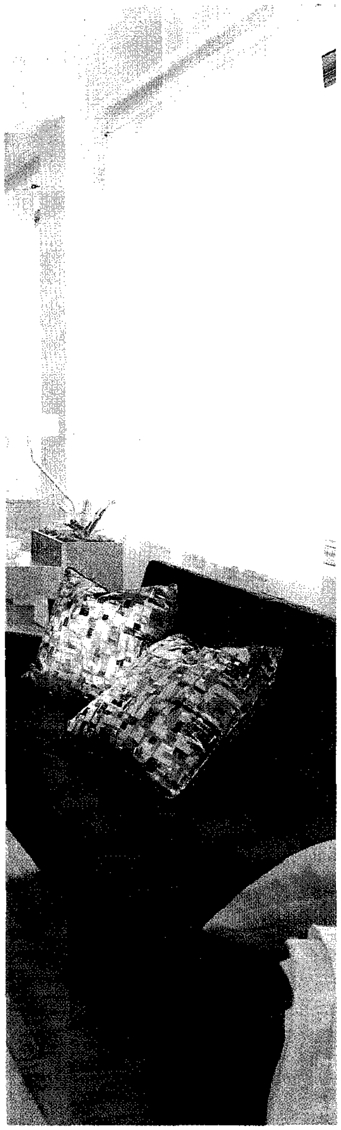
BREATHING ROOMS
A **storage wall** slices the dining area off the living room and is a **nod** to one designed by **Mies van der Rohe** for Farnsworth House in Plano, Illinois. The sofa is by **Florence Knoll**, the chairs by **Jens Risom**. Pillows upholstered in fifties Chanel fabric and the rug are from **Salon Moderne**; the lamp was discovered at Lin-Weinberg.



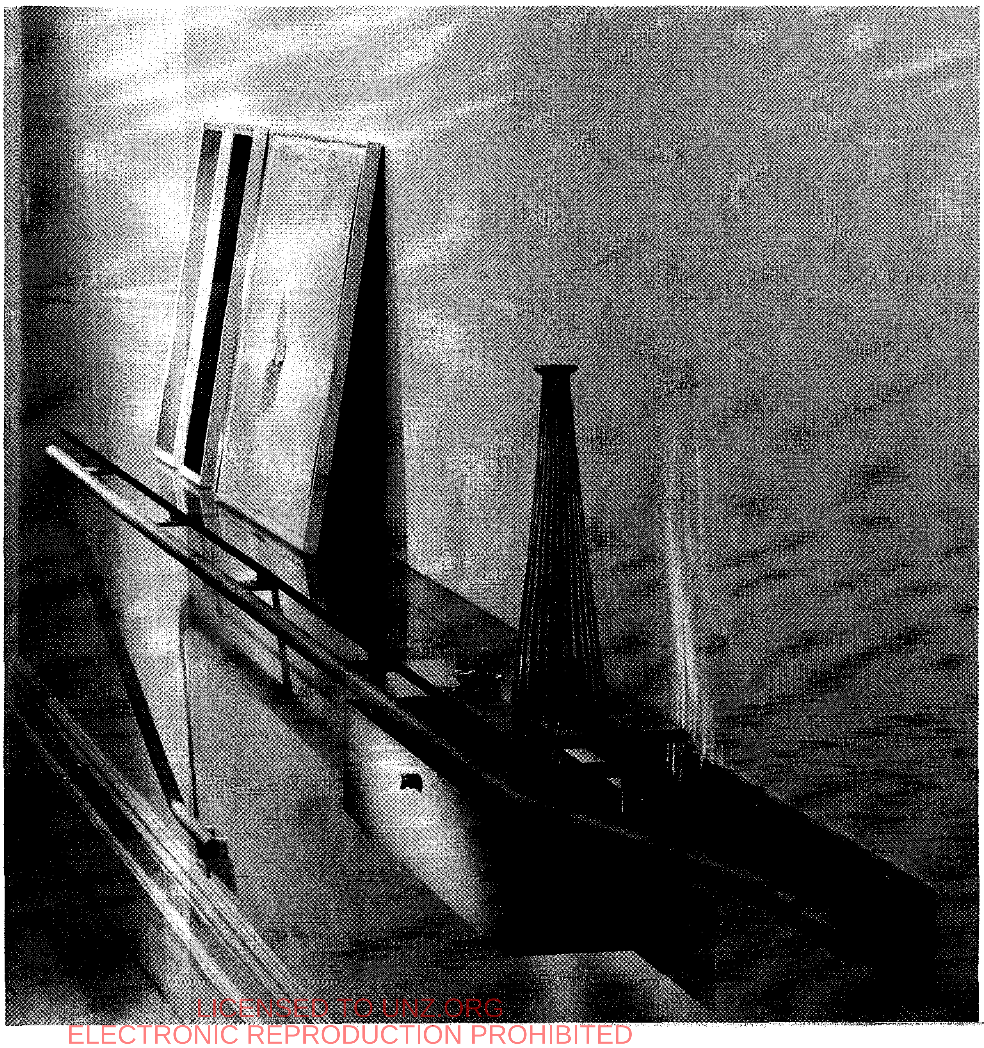


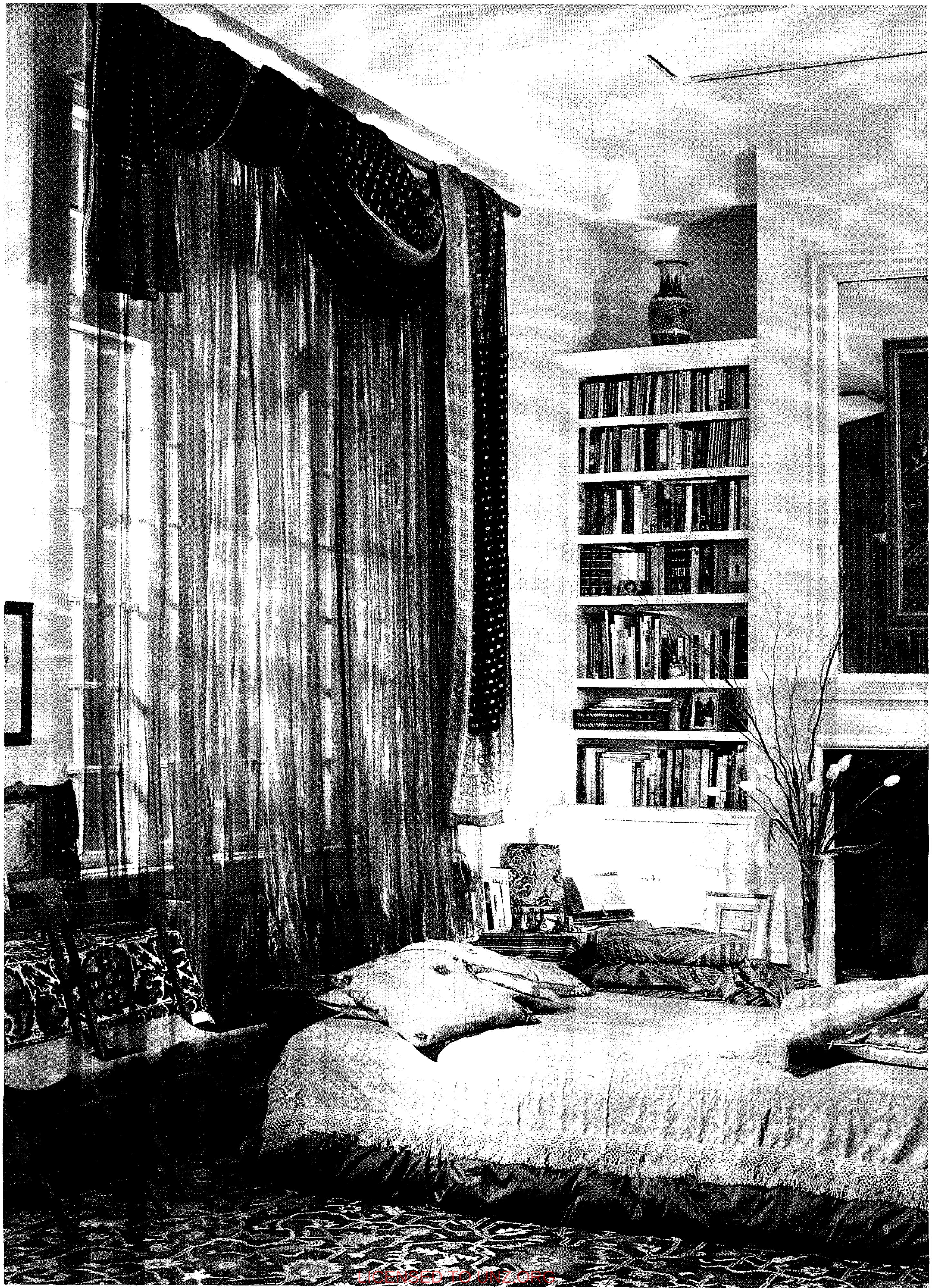


SILVER LINING "With **these doors** [far left], we wanted to **reframe** the views," says Sanders, who matched the Reitveld **Zig-Zag chairs** with a Le Corbusier table . Vases from Troy. Painting by Peter Dayton at the Morris-Healy Gallery. Near left, aluminum railing **grafts** a telephone table to a bookcase. Below, an **alternative** to the standard boring hallway console; mail is stashed in the **glove-compartment-like** box.



"The point of the aluminum railing," says Sanders, "was to torque up the existing prewar shell and guide the visitor through the apartment from foyer to living room."

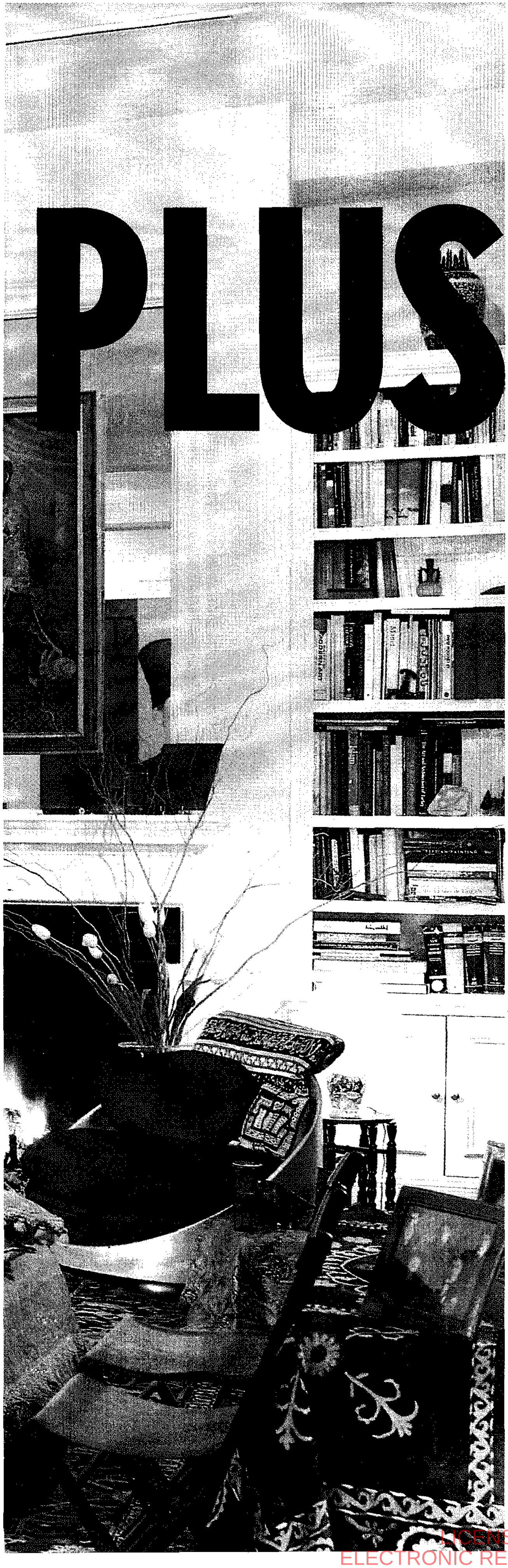




PLUSH LIFE

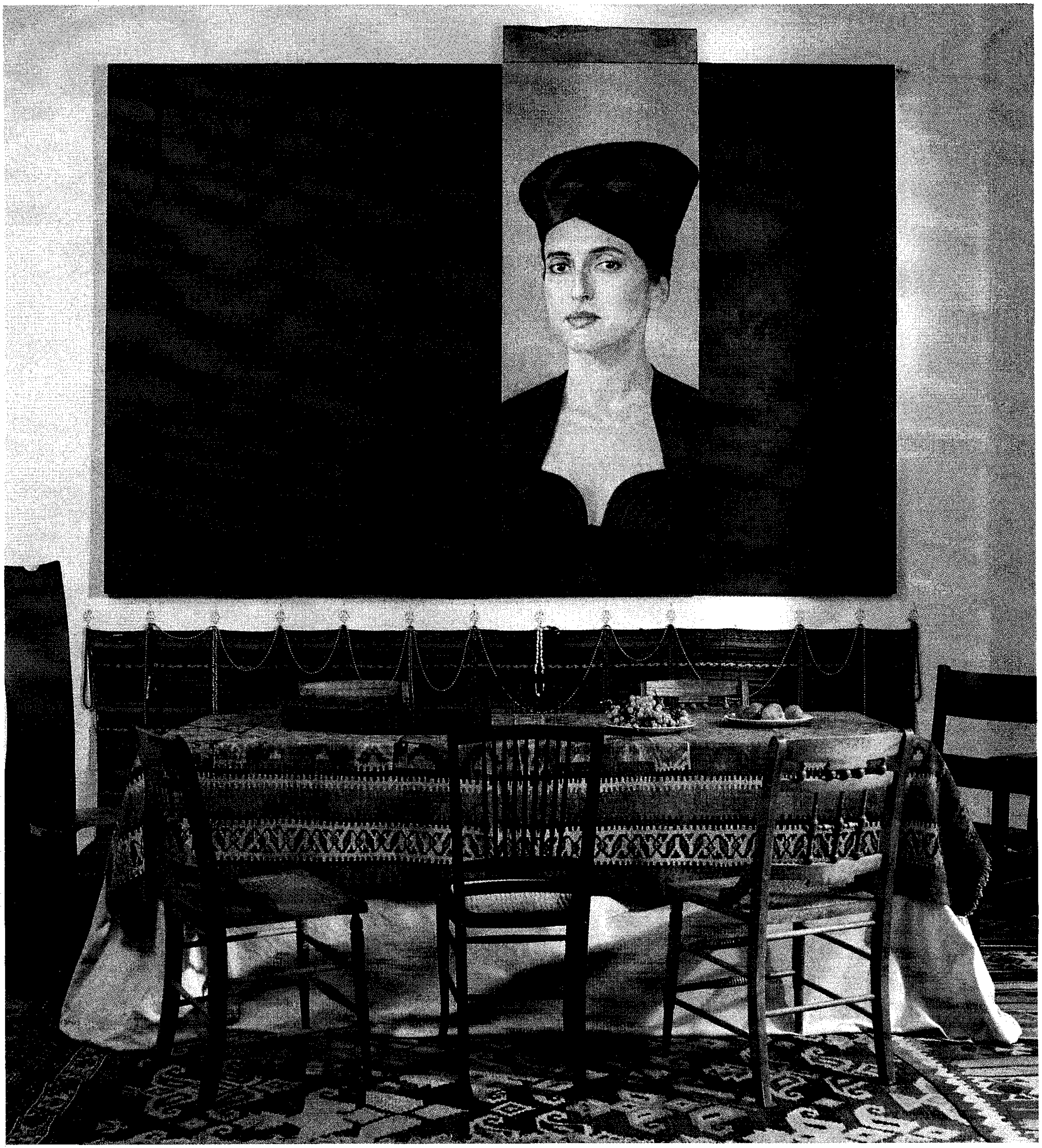
On the Upper East Side, **a kilim-saturated apartment** where a bed is the couch and sitting on the floor is encouraged. Pull up a pillow.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANDREW BORDWIN



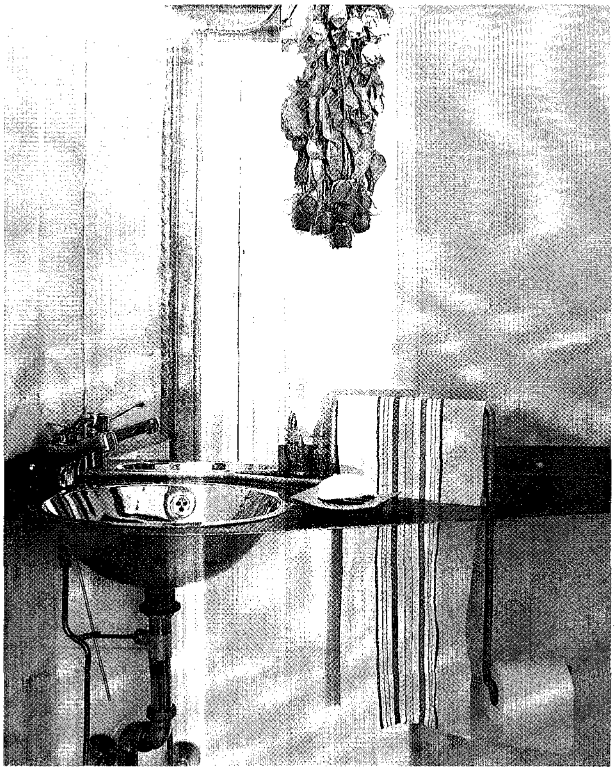
FLOWERS COURTESY OF PAUL BOTT/BEAUTIFUL FLOWERS

CARPET DIEM Left, the mid-eighteenth-century **Persian rug** plays well with the valence made out of **saris** Ahari found in Jackson Heights. The curtains have been fashioned from a **metallic-mesh fabric**. Above, the filigreed ceremonial armor is a **family heirloom**.

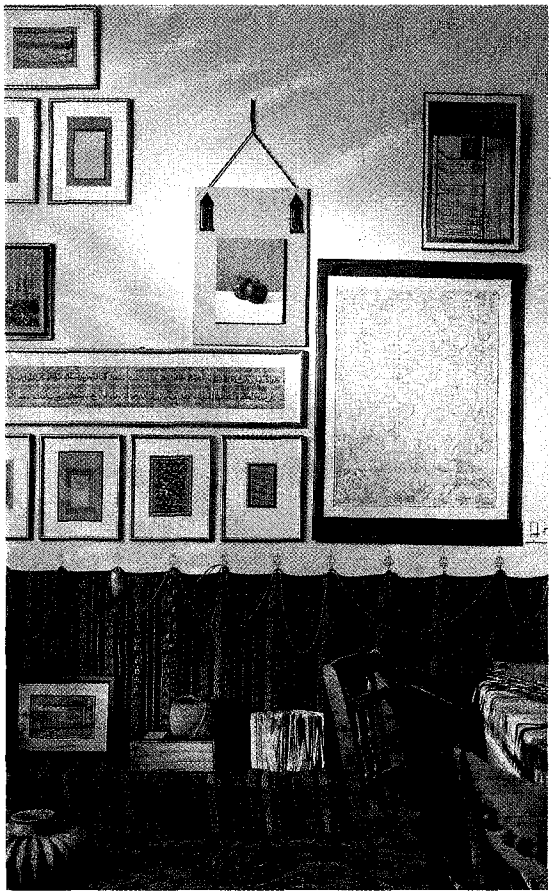


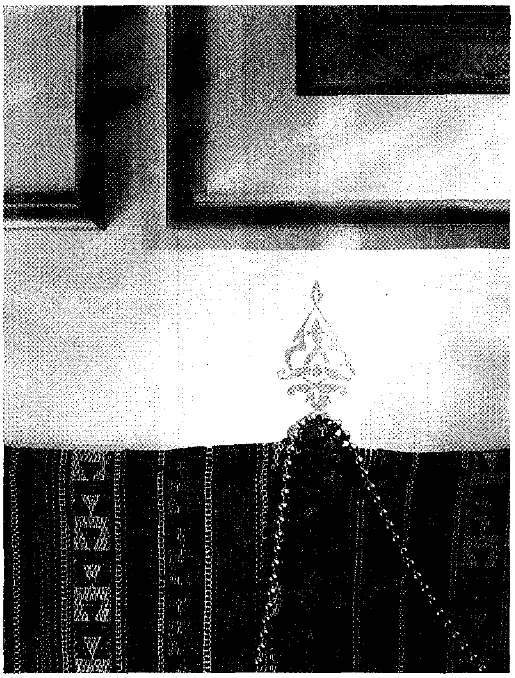
PURPLE REIGNS The client uses this kilim as a **tablecloth.** Presiding at the head of the table is a **crescent-seated** Nachtgedicht chair by Rolf Sachs. The other chairs are **turn-of-the-century American** and were purchased at a **flea market** upstate.

DRAPERIES FASHIONED OUT OF SILK SARIS. A WALL UPHOLSTERED WITH a Persian rug. Silk pillows strewn across a bed right smack in the middle of the living room. This isn't exactly Sister Parish. It's M. N. Ahari doing Paul Bowles in an Upper East Side one-bedroom. ■ "I could have laid down wall-to-wall sisal, and the client would have accepted it," says Ahari, whose firm, Ahari & Associates Architecture, was drafted by a client with Persian ancestry. "But that wasn't his fantasy. His fantasy had to do with the lushness of Orientalism. He wanted to live in an opium den." ■ Make that an opium den spackled with an eloquent Middle Eastern–calligraphy collection. Antique glass beads appear to hang from stenciled *faux* finials. Eighteenth-century armor, in a riff on the English manner, is mingled with family portraits. A large, violet-drenched painting by the highly collectible Y. Z. Kami looms over the dining room—quite obviously from another era, but totally in sync with the colors of the souk.



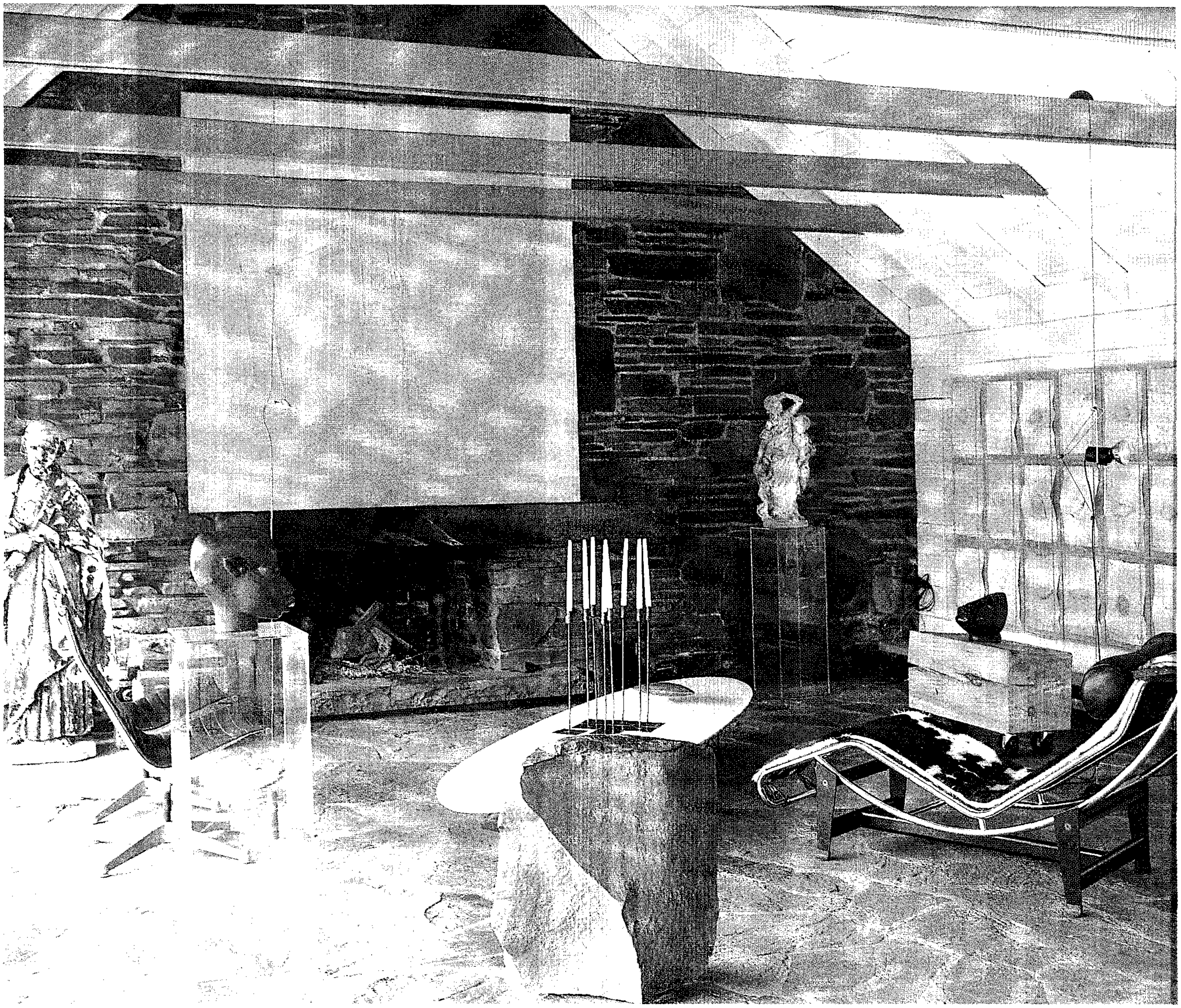
"Look at the Calvin Klein store," says Ahari. "There's nothing tactile. I think **people would rather feel kilims** under their feet."





JEJIM DANDY
These **inexpensive rugs** are used as insulation in **yurts**. But here, they conceal **storage units** that double as a **shelf** for the art collection.

TURKISH TOWEL
Above, the walls were clad in **muslin** to make the powder room reminiscent of **a tent**. Ahari designed the **multipurpose** towel rack. Left, antique African glass beads and a golden strand purchased on **Canal Street** are draped through a hook concealed in a **vaguely Middle Eastern** stencil—a **virtual finial**.

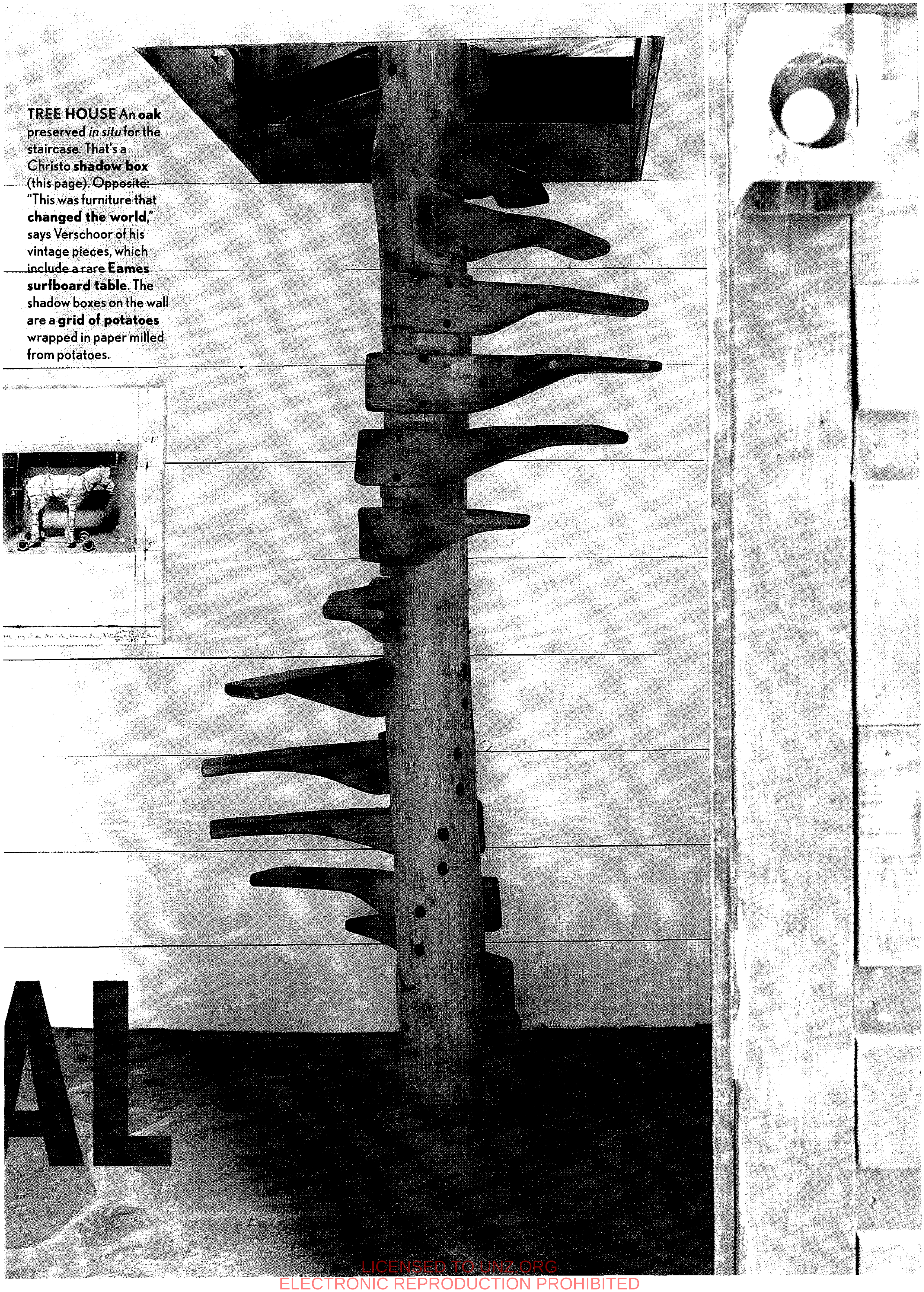


SUPER NATUR

A SoHo artist pulls a Thoreau in Ulster County, overhauling his house with potatoes and dried leaves.

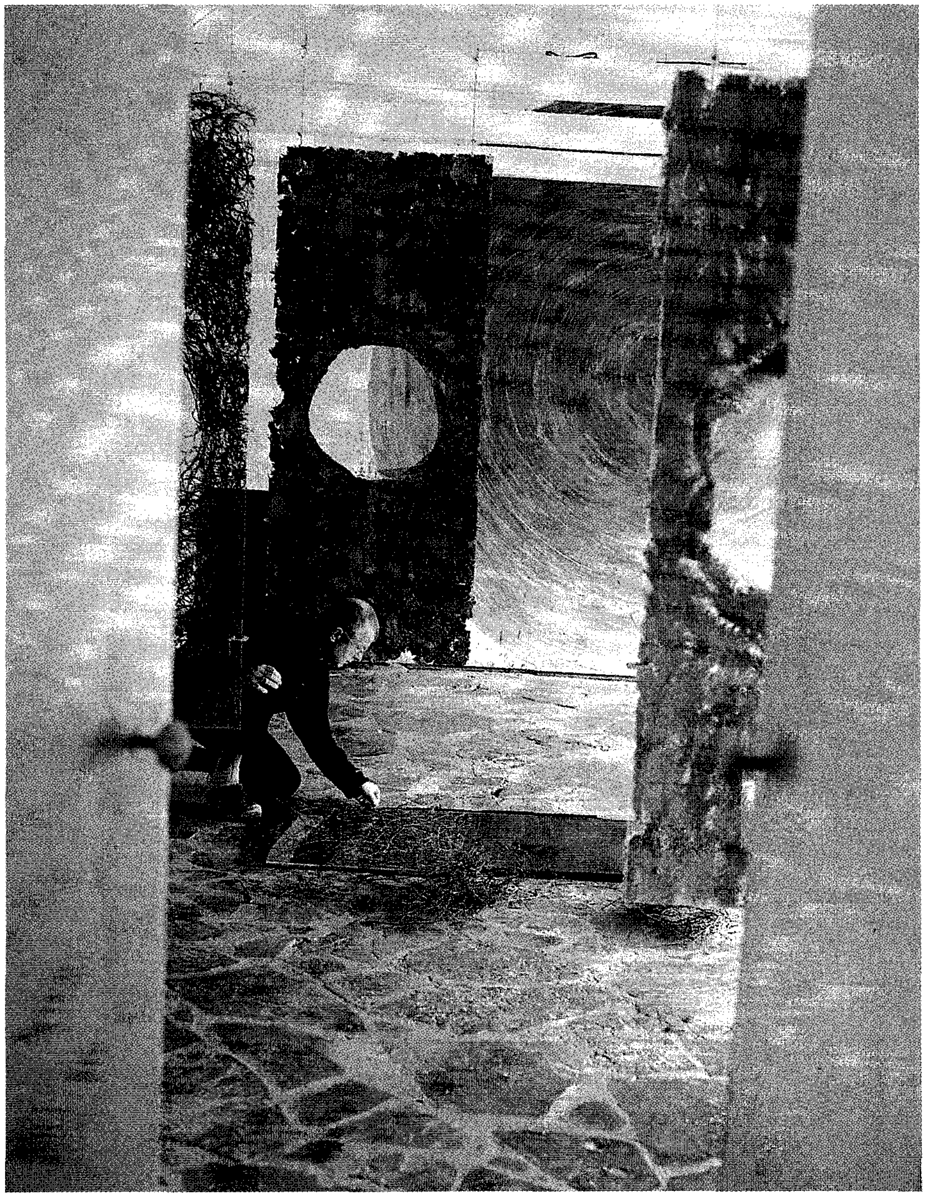
AFTER SEVERAL YEARS IN A SOHO LOFT, ARTIST GERD Verschoor thought he would never move again. Until a road trip to Accord, New York. He recalls his first encounter with Ulster County: "Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* was playing on the car stereo, and I was surrounded by this amazing landscape. I immediately fell in love with the idea of living in a red barn. Of

PHOTOGRAPHED BY THIBAULT JEANSON



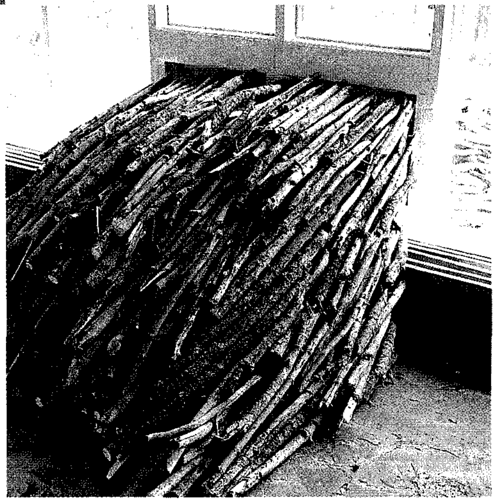
TREE HOUSE An **oak** preserved *in situ* for the staircase. That's a Christo **shadow box** (this page). Opposite: "This was furniture that **changed the world**," says Verschoor of his vintage pieces, which include a rare **Eames surfboard table**. The shadow boxes on the wall are a **grid of potatoes** wrapped in paper milled from potatoes.

AL

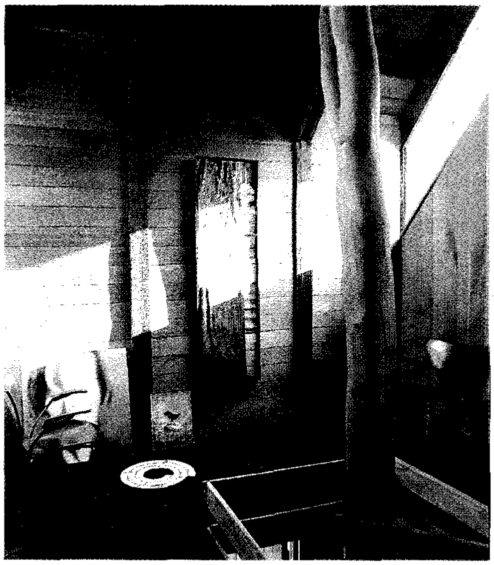


course, when I told a broker I was interested in looking at barns, he threw me out of his office." ▪ With a dearth of barns on the market, Verschoor settled on a house of heroic proportions designed by Nancy Copley, a local architect and Frank Lloyd Wright acolyte. Wright's mannerisms are clearly evident: flagstone floor, exposed beams, glass walls, a tree trunk hewn into a staircase. But despite such flourishes, the interior remained drab. "Everything was painted brown," he remembers. ▪ Verschoor is perhaps best known for his much-imitated installations at Le Madri: roses suspended from the ceiling in clear plastic Chinese-takeout containers, for example. And so we have potatoes hung in regimented rows, thousands of sticks exploding through a window, and a coffee-table clutch of Jacopo Poli grappa bottles. "It's Le Corbusier meets kitsch and a bunch of potatoes," says Verschoor. ▪ He isn't the only city artist to run for the hills: Nancy Ostrovsky, Hans Van de Bovenkamp, Jeff Shapiro, and Ursula Von Rydingsvard are all members of this booming Catskills enclave. In the past two years, the area has become a weekend hideaway for TriBeCa loft dwellers Dafoe, Keitel, and De Niro. Verschoor regards this latest migration as particularly ominous: "When they open a TriBeCa Grill, I'll know it's time to leave."

"Artists can have more courage than interior designers," says Verschoor. "They're not so concerned that the love seat, the wallpaper, and the Picasso all match."



STICKS AND STONE
Above, Verschoor tends his **deconstructed forest**, sandwiching dried vines between **panes of Plexiglas**. A **beaver dam** clogs a window in the studio—it's all part of Verschoor's **rustic shtick**.



ORGANIC CHEMISTRY Left, Verschoor's eccentric assemblage of **natural-bristle brushes** from all over the world. Above, in the bedroom, Arne Jacobsen **Ant chairs** flank the stairwell. Below, row upon row of **potatoes** planted in transparent **Chinese-takeout containers**. The provenance of the chairs? Bertoia, **Starck**, and the 26th Street flea market.

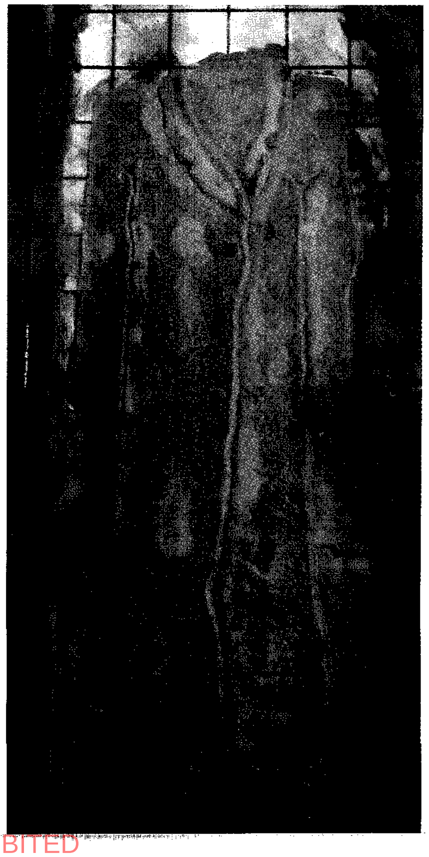
PESCE'S PLAY HOUSE

Gaetano Pesce lets his id run wild on Park Avenue with a floorful of faces, shoelace-spattered curtains, and a table that moos.

ARCHITECT, SCULPTOR, MUSICIAN, FASHION DESIGNER—IF anyone can pull off an audacious interior, it's Gaetano Pesce. In Europe, where design is discussed the way restaurant openings are here, his is a household name. ■ Pesce made a gaudy splash in New York three years ago when he renovated advertising agency Chiat/Day's New York offices. Few realize there's another Pesce interior in this country—an apartment on Park Avenue owned by industrial designer Ruth Shuman. Shuman's apartment was actually a lab for many of the innovations employed at Chiat/Day. ■ All the signature Pesce touches are here: psychedelic colors, papier-mâché cabinetry, outré custom furniture, and signage that is both artistic and instructional. "People either passionately embrace this place or they run for cover," says Shuman. "Color can be a very threatening thing. Most people hang a Bruce Nauman on their wall and think they're daring. But this is taking color to the

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANDREW GARN

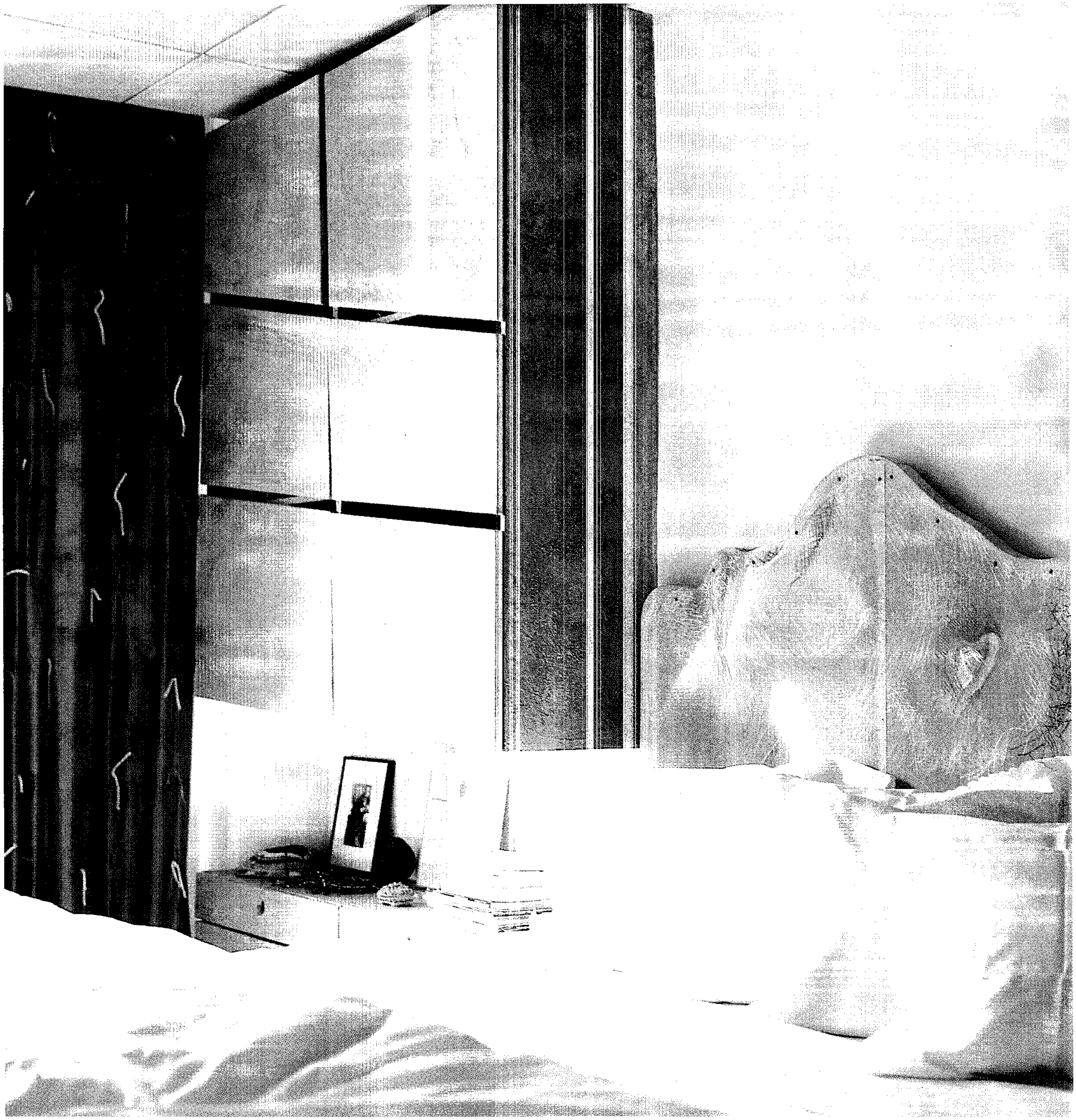
GROUP DYNAMIC Left, Pesce performed his first **experimental pouring** of a 1,500-square-foot resin **floor portrait** in Shuman's living room. Right, a well-dressed **closet door.**



BEHIND THE RESIN DOOR
Far left, a **Mondrian-tinted** map points the way to the bedroom, study, and bathroom. Left, Is that one of Pesce's **Pratt chairs** (or Pee-wee's sidekick, Chairy)? The coffee-table cube in the library **moos** when you touch it.

"For centuries we have been conditioned to live in sober spaces," says Pesce. "People **must start accepting color** as something functional that can make us feel good."

OUTRÉ LIMITS
Plywood cabinetry with a **veneer of resin** and epoxy simulates **distressed copper**. Pesce's resin-skinned **Airport lamp** skulks behind a Barcelona chair.



*n*th degree." ▨ "A home should not be a personal monument to the designer," says Pesce. "Rather, it should reflect the personality of the client. Ruth is a happy person. She needed a cheerful place to live." Her apartment makes Pee-wee's playhouse look as anodyne as Charlie Rose's set—it's the perfect foil to the currently voguish minimalist-mausoleum look. ▨ But can a generation weaned on the emaciated Armani flagship store, Ross Bleckner paintings, and particles of sashimi swimming in negative space at Nobu appreciate Pesce's Kodachrome aesthetic? "Absolutely," he replies. "Color is beginning to show up in industrial design, in everything from glassware to computers. Even Issey Miyake and Comme des Garçons are starting to use color in their collections. Slowly, the world catches up with Pesce."

HEADS UP Pesce toned things down in the bedroom, putting a **human face** on the bed with **paint and crayons**. The taffeta draperies are festooned with **shoelaces**.

ORIENT EXCESS

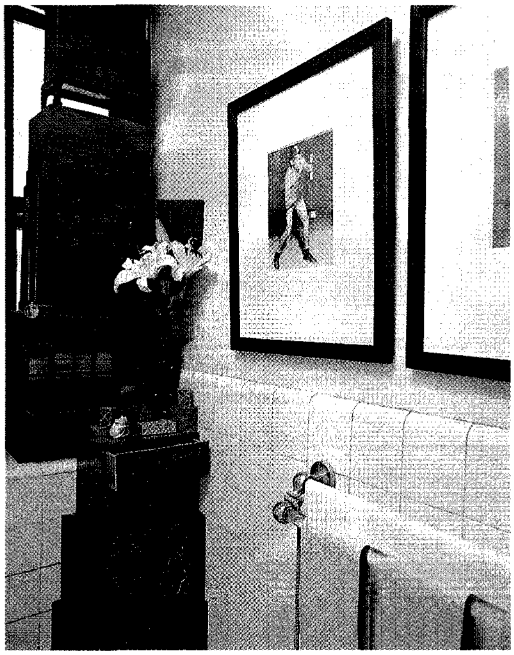
Robert Homma has funneled the entire Far East into this itty-bitty studio. It could have been a **Warholian junkfest**, but it’s not, thanks to Homma’s eye for stacks, boxes, and collages.

ORGANIZATION MAN Homma uses these Chinese and Japanese dishes from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries at dinner parties. With his first paycheck in New York, he snagged a nineteenth-century Tansu chest (opposite) from a woman living in an SRO hotel.

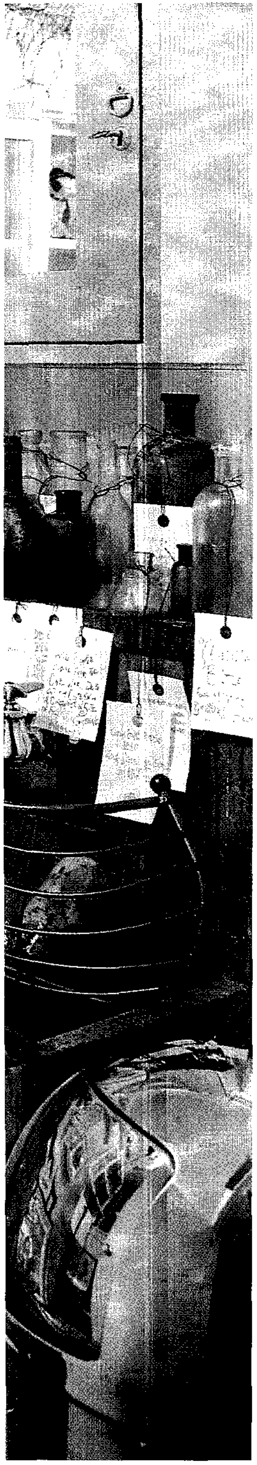
ROBERT HOMMA STANDS IN THE MIDDLE OF HIS postage-stamp-size studio apartment. His dog, a standard poodle named Licorice, heels at his side. Between the two of them and the antiques and flea-market detritus, there isn’t much floor space left. “Believe it or not, I used to be a minimalist,” says Homma. “I lived in a *huge* apartment with a handful of furnishings. It was very Zen—shoji screens, tatami mats. My friends called it ‘the museum.’ Now look at me. I’ve turned into my worst nightmare—I’m a maximalist.” ■ As a co-owner of Dimson Homma, a boutique on East 67th Street with a grab bag of round-the-world ephemera, Homma is amused by the public’s recent fixation on Orientalia. But not surprised. “Eastern art is just as valid as Western art,” he says earnestly (see “Best Bids: A Thing for Ming,” page 88). Everyone was just slow in coming around. ■ Homma’s West 68th

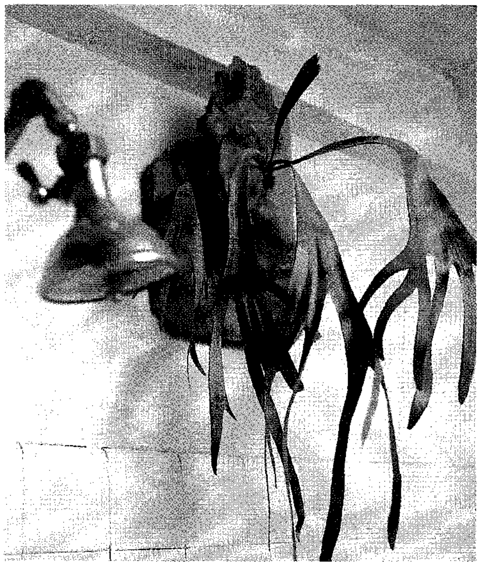
PHOTOGRAPHED BY KARI HAAVISTO

BOX POPULI Below, in the bathroom, a pileup of nineteenth-century marquetry chests from Japan's Hakone prefecture function as a sort of window shade. Homma picked them up in such exotic locales as London, Istanbul, Copenhagen, Paris—and Virginia. Other collections are concealed within.

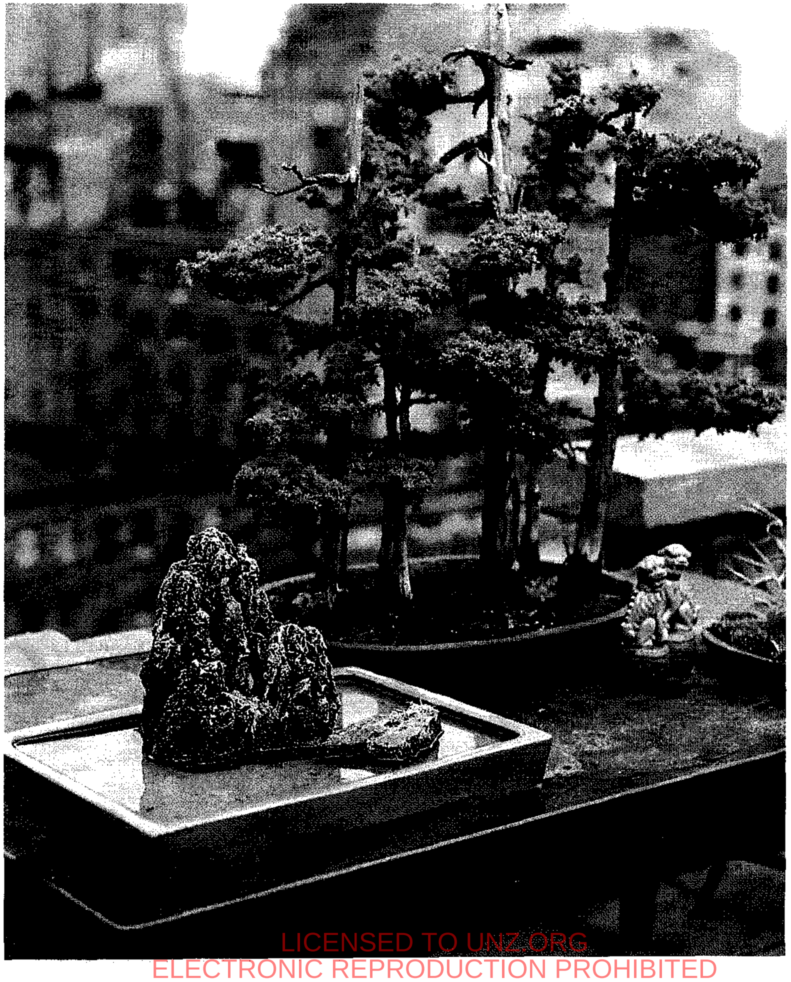


Street studio is stuffed with eighteenth- and nineteenth-century antiquities: a Tansu chest from Japan, a Buddha from Burma, bronze vases from China. Even the vegetation on his terrace has its roots in the Far East. Forget ficus—Homma's most impressive plant is a 49-year-old Japanese bonsai juniper grove (currently on sale in Dimson Homma for $10,000). Not that everything is high-end. In one corner, biscuit boxes, tea tins, and jewelry caskets from Paris, Copenhagen, and Istanbul are assembled in an artful pyramid. An original 1932 Popeye made by King's Features stands arms akimbo. It's all about managing a whimsical chaos of knickknacks and precious artifacts. "Design should be fun," says the third-generation Japanese-American. "If things get too serious, people don't feel comfortable."



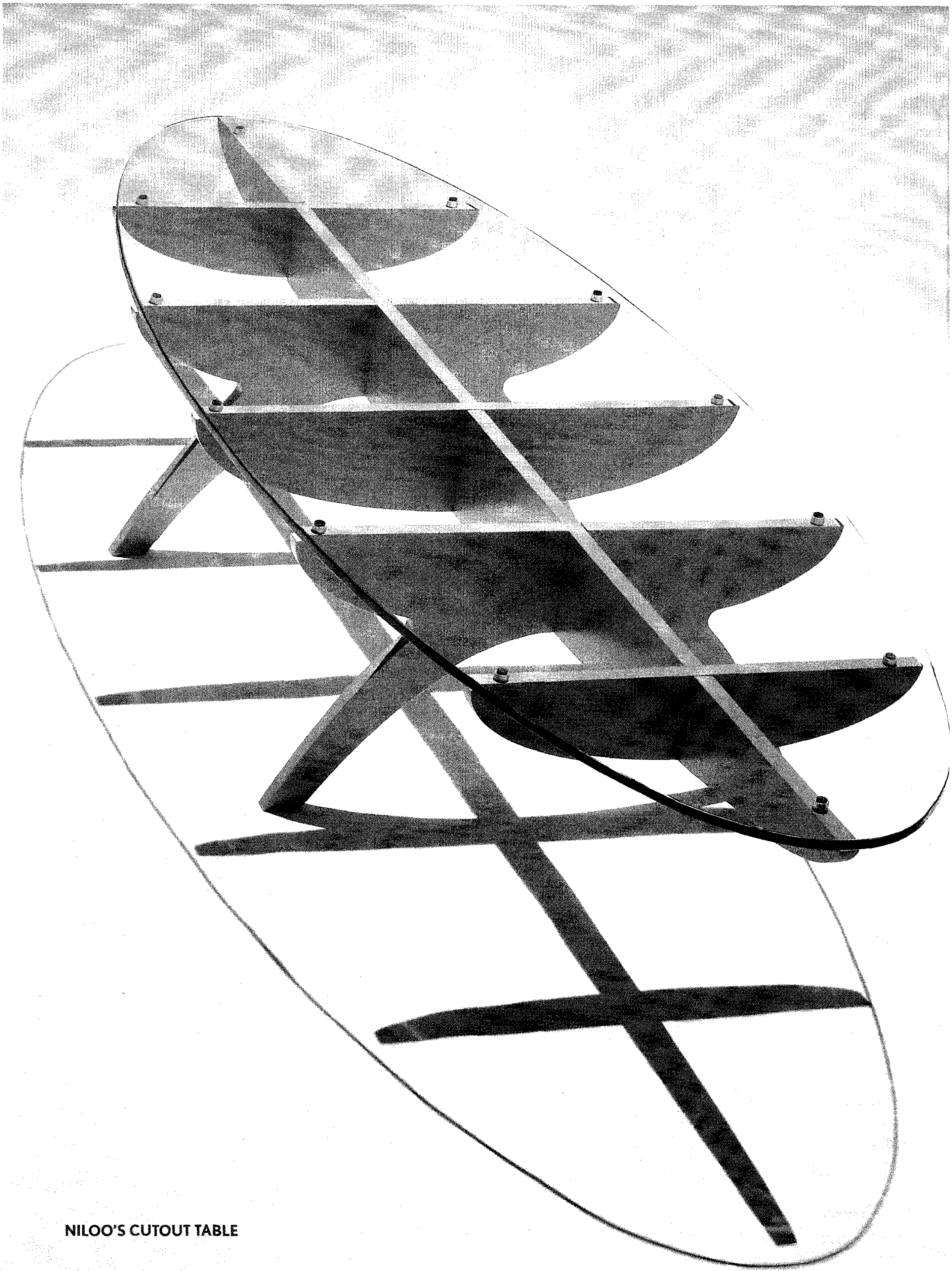


"**Surround yourself** with things you feel passionate about," Homma insists. "My apartment is a haven. It's for friends—**not the design police.**"



AH, WILDERNESS Left, Homma's ancient bonsai juniper grove. Henry Moore and Brancusi collected Chinese scholar's rocks like the one in the forefront. Above left, a windowsill still life. Above right, a staghorn fern has a symbiotic relationship with a vintage twenties showerhead.

THINK SINK The one in the bathroom at Dimson Homma is slate and came from the Manhattan Project laboratory at Columbia University. Archaeologist Scott Jordan excavated the handblown bottles—some dating back to the Civil War—at sites in all five boroughs.



NILOO'S CUTOUT TABLE

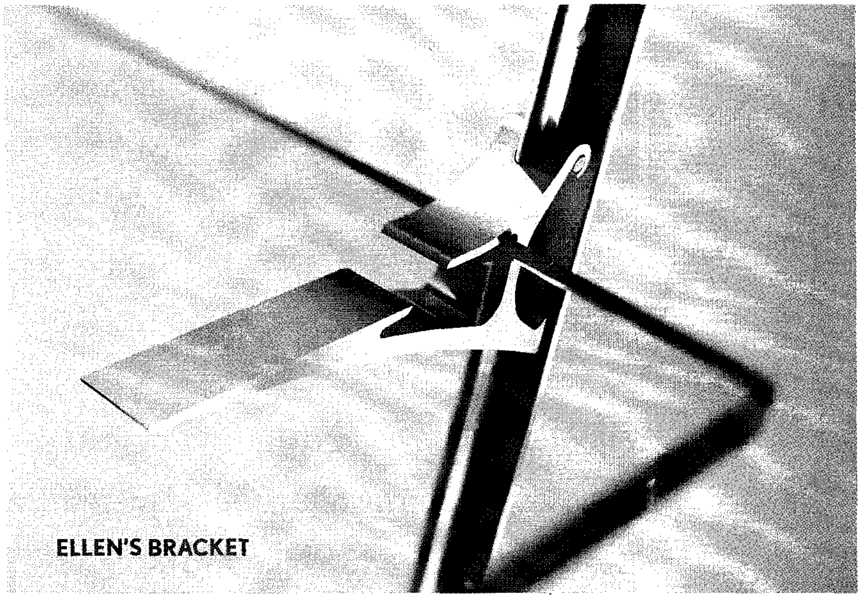
YOUNG TURK

Ali who? Ali Tayar, the design-world darling whose furniture lies somewhere between IKEA and Philippe Starck.

TO SAY THAT CONTEMPORARY FURNITURE DESIGN IS IN A rut is like saying that Howard Stern has a passing interest in publicity. ■ "It's getting increasingly difficult to find things I can get excited about," says Marian McEvoy, the editor of *Elle Decor,* who is evidently tired of the distressed-leather club chairs, wacky Phillippe Starck rip-offs, slipcovered dining chairs, and trompe l'oeil–painted armoires. Designer Kitty Hawks concurs: "The pickings are slim when it comes to residential furniture. The only interesting things I've seen lately are a handful of office pieces." George Beylerian, a top design consultant, is somewhat less ambivalent: "All furniture today is baroque garbage." ■ But ask these same three people what they think of a young furniture designer named Ali Tayar and suddenly their moods brighten. "Ali's furniture is beautiful," froths McEvoy. Hawks, too, is overwhelmed: "Ali's designs are profound," she says. Even the jaded Beylerian perks up at the mention of Tayar's name. "Ali's work is new, experimental, and exciting," he says. "I mean, take a look at his table. Have you ever seen a table like that?" ■ It *is* quite a

PHOTOGRAPHED BY JOSHUA McHUGH

RAYMOND'S ARMCHAIR



ELLEN'S BRACKET

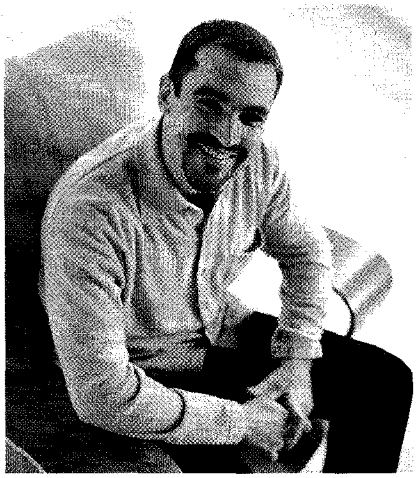


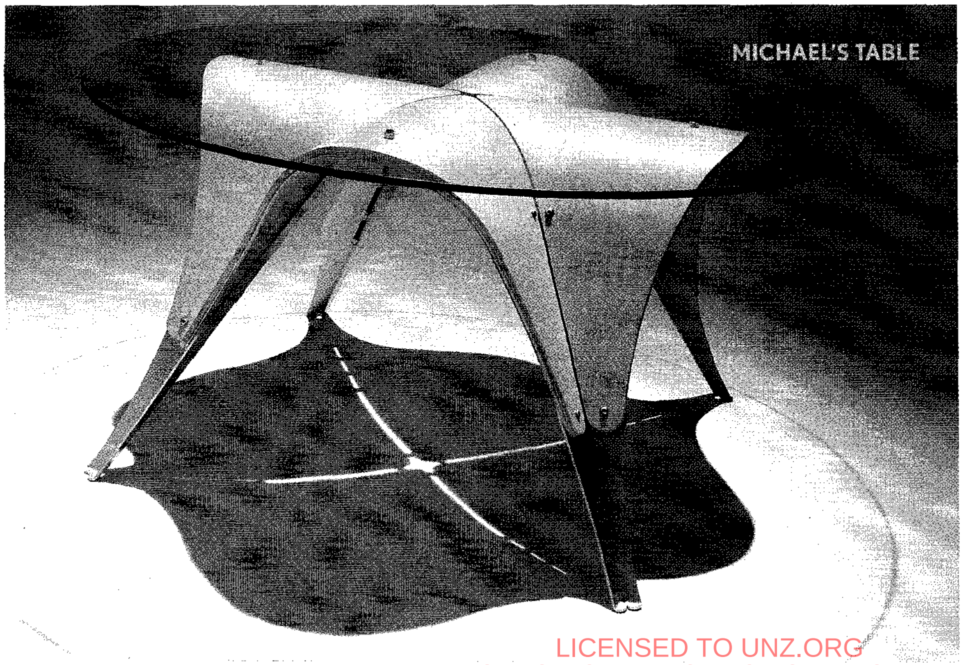
table. Inspired by the cross vault, commonly used in cathedral architecture, Michael's Table (each of Tayar's pieces is named after the client who commissioned it) is an audacious melding of wood, glass, and metal. Four molded plywood shells, connected by aluminum brackets, arch upward from the ground to form the base, with a circular glass top that appears to float in space. The historical references are clear (Charles and Ray Eames, Carlo Molino, a definite Antoni Gaudí influence), but Michael's Table is undoubtedly a contemporary piece of furniture.

DRESSED IN CLARK'S DESERT BOOTS, Levi's 501s, and a cashmere mock turtleneck, Ali Tayar looks exactly how one would expect a 37-year-old architect who has just set up shop in the recently gentrified meatpacking district to look—handsome and confident, with a slightly hungry glint in his eye. His business, Parallel Design Partnership Limited, is located directly above Hogs & Heifers, a *faux*-redneck bar that caters to bikers, investment bankers, and women who get their kicks dancing topless to Johnny Cash. "I found the pallet that became the basis for my NEA Table"—so called because the prototype was subsidized by the National Endowment for the Arts—"discarded on the street, right outside my front door," says the Turkish immigrant.

The pallet, once used by forklift operators to haul boxes of prime beef, has been sandwiched between sheets of glass, making the high-tech industrial material look unexpectedly elegant, in the same way that Frank Gehry's famous cardboard furniture must have looked 25 years ago. It was this $5 skid, made out of compressed wood chips and resin, that Tayar was convinced would change his life. After researching the technology used to manufacture particleboard, he filled out an NEA-grant-application form, declaring his intention to "explore the potential of molded particleboard as a new material for furniture design."

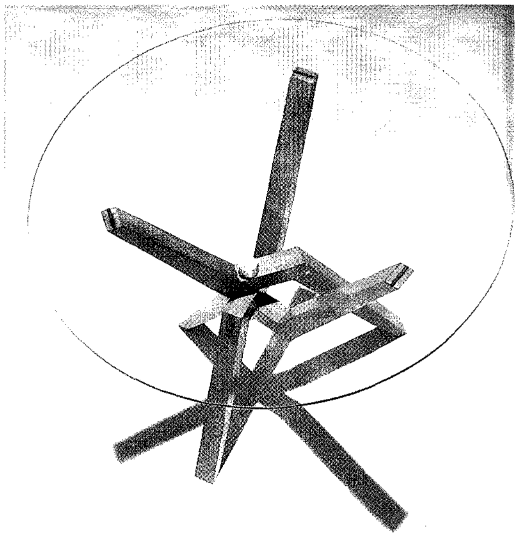
The NEA immediately cut him a check for $25,000, and Tayar went to work on a particleboard coffee table. Upon completion, it was selected by MOMA for its "Mutant Materials in Contemporary Design" exhibition. So was another of his pieces, an ingenious aluminum shelving bracket one client said reminded her of expensive jewelry (Ellen's Brackets). Tayar was an instant celebrity among design fetishists. "I thought the MOMA show would lead to fame, fortune, and a furniture contract," he says. "Little did I realize that a critically acclaimed furniture designer has about the same job prospects as a poet laureate."

TAYAR GREW UP IN ISTANBUL, OVERLOOKing the Bosporus. He attended Stuttgart University and, later, M.I.T., an architectural education he describes as "orthodox modernist." Heroes include Antoni Gaudí, whom Tayar admires as a structural innovator, and Jean Prouvé, a French Modernist designer and



MICHAEL'S TABLE

> **"I don't want to be known as the guy who made cool furniture for rich people," says Tayar. "You should be able to order it out of a catalogue."**



NICK'S TRIVET

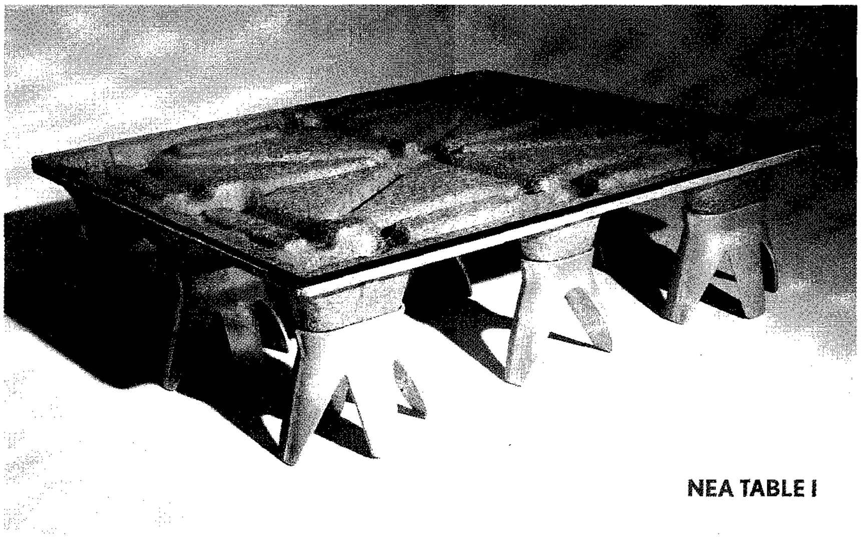
architect who managed to put his austere metal furniture into mass production. Tayar tries to balance his work somewhere between these two extremes. "I don't want to be known as the guy that made cool furniture for rich people," says Tayar. "You should be able to order my things out of a catalogue just like IKEA."

At this point his "mass-producible" furniture is built on a made-to-order basis by craftsmen in woodworking shops in Brooklyn and Troy, New York. The signature dining table is $5,000; an armchair is $4,500. It would cost approximately $8,000 to reproduce another NEA Table. With few exceptions, the only people who have placed orders are Tayar's friends. The big manufacturing companies have seen his work and even liked it, but passed.

The irony is not lost on Tayar. "It's like making a Volkswagen Beetle completely by hand," he says. "The idea is to hook up with a manufacturer. If we were making thousands of units at a time, the furniture could become quite affordable."

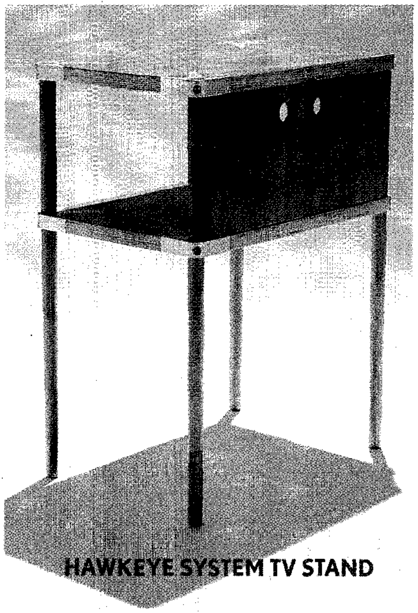
His brackets already are: Walk into any Aveda store, and you will see Ellen's Brackets supporting glass shelves filled with botanical shampoos. Not only have they been critically praised (in addition to the MOMA show, they garnered *ID* magazine's prestigious Design Distinction award), but they have become mass-producible. Initially costing $200 per, they can now be purchased at Simon's Hardware & Bath for $19.75.

Tayar is optimistic that someday his furniture too will find its way out of TriBeCa lofts and into the outer boroughs. His strategy thus far has been to use his furniture as an architectural calling card. Through the strength of Michael's Table and Raymond's Armchair, an upholstered chair that looks like Alvar Aalto on a good day, he has brokered architecture gigs ranging from a lavish Greenwich Village renovation (published in *Elle Decor*) to an extraordinary perforated-aluminum gate that protects the contents of Gansevoort Gallery, a pricey West Village furniture store. The owner, Mark McDonald, was so impressed that he offered to rep Tayar's entire line, highly unusual for a boutique that deals exclusively in vintage modern furniture. And the architectural commissions keep rolling in. Tayar is currently working on a house in South Africa as well as on Waterloo, a new restaurant being opened this spring by the proprietors of Le Zoo.

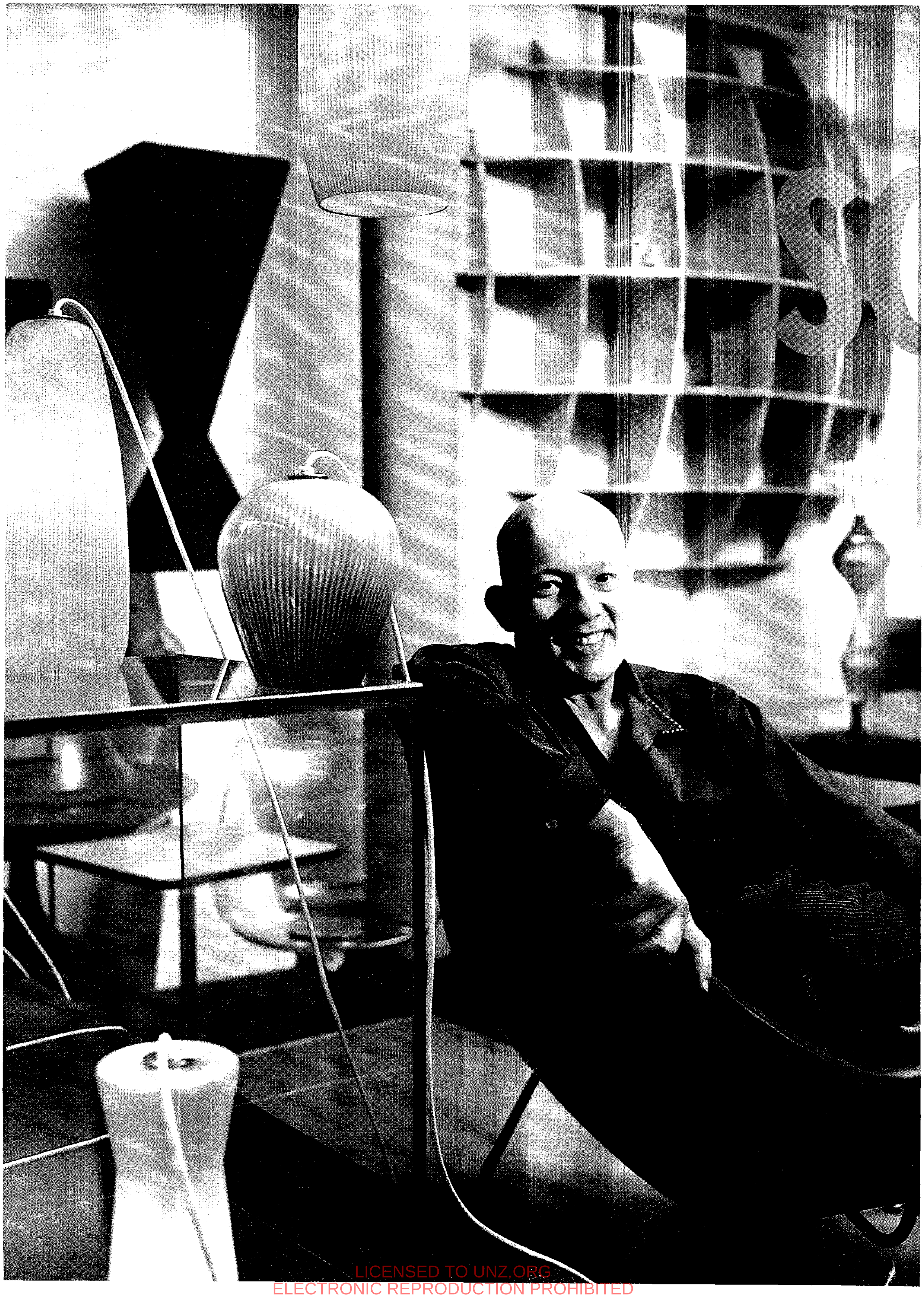


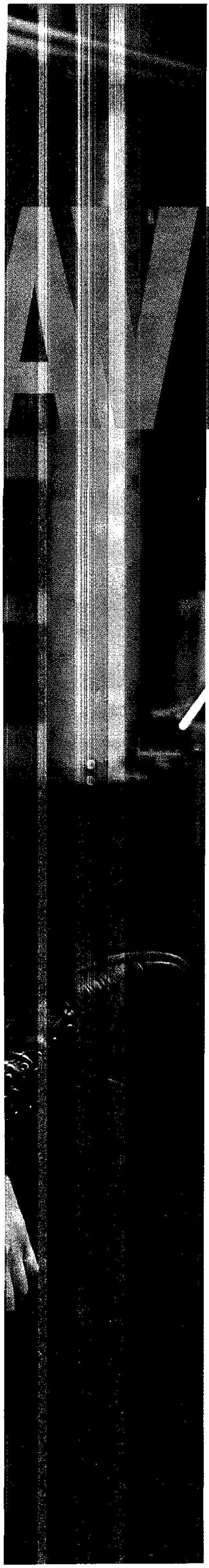
NEA TABLE I

TAYAR OPENS A LEATHER-BOUND BOOK and flips through it. The pages are filled with the most extraordinary sketches, future projects, many of them having nothing to do with furniture: a clock radio made out of plywood, porcelain tableware in the shape of concentric spheres and cylinders, a double-sided photographic frame. One of the diagrams is particularly intriguing. It's a combination ashtray–candle holder that will eventually end up on the linen-covered tables at Waterloo. When it is mentioned that the compact design could easily be filched by larcenous diners, Tayar's eyes widen. "I may finally have discovered the perfect way to distribute my work to the masses," he says. ■



HAWKEYE SYSTEM TV STAND





AVENGER HUNT

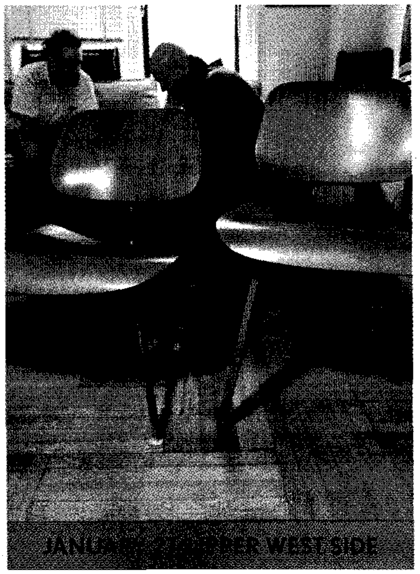
Where does the city's savviest furniture dealer trawl for Eames chairs? From dawn at the 26th Street flea market to dusk in the backstreets of the Bronx, *New York* tags along.

USED FURNITURE
HANK'S ALLEY
QUALITY ANTIQUES & USED FURNITURE
OFF

RICK GALLAGHER'S SUCCESS IS A CURIOUS THING. HE doesn't have the most stunning retail space in the neighborhood: The carpet is threadbare, and the paint on the ceiling is peeling off in strips the size of palm fronds. Nor is the presentation of merchandise in any way consistent with the prevailing minimalist mentality. Stools are stacked on top of one another. Lamp fixtures sprout frayed wires. The place isn't even particularly clean. But the *furniture*—the furniture will never be mistaken for reproductions. Everything is heavy on patina. It's all part of the distressed 280 Modern look. ■ Despite all this (or possibly because of it), 280 Modern is arguably the most fashionable furniture boutique in the city. Winona Ryder, David Bowie, Peter Marino, and Yoko Ono are all customers. The modest storefront also draws prop

PHOTOGRAPHED BY BARRY MUNGER

JANUARY 24, TEPPER GALLERIES


JANUARY 27, UPPER WEST SIDE

JANUARY 27, MANHATTAN ARTS

stylists and fashion editors in search of the perfect chair for Amber Valletta to slouch in (Gallagher has several pieces in the March issue of *Vogue*).

Other stores on the Lafayette strip may have Heywood-Wakefield bureaus with satiny finishes, but 280 Modern boasts Smokey Tunis, an obscure designer who cobbles couches out of what looks like driftwood. It's the difference between buying Tommy Hilfiger and Helmut Lang. Lang, incidentally, just happens to be a 280 Modern regular.

The man behind this operation doesn't look like someone who peddles furniture for a living. Tall and muscular, the 48-year-old Gallagher has an unmistakable presence, bolstered by a Yul Brynner shave, an indeterminable British accent, and a droll sense of humor. Stroking his pate, Gallagher recalls the epiphany that launched his current career: "I was doing interior demolition in the seventies. Several of us would go into an apartment and start knocking down walls with a sledgehammer. One of the first jobs I did was this huge apartment on the Upper East Side. It was filled with all these incredible objects—furniture, paintings, books. There were even unopened boxes from Sotheby's, filled with vintage bolts of fabric. Unfortunately, most of the stuff I saw went straight into a Dumpster. That really disturbed me. I've been retrieving things from trash cans ever since."

Which raises the question: How *exactly* does a SoHo furniture merchant procure his goods? Gallagher smiles. "People think that I just drive through the suburbs on garbage night and fill up my truck," he says. "That still happens occasionally. I once found a Warren McArthur dining table out on the street. But most things you have to ferret out."

FRIDAY, JANUARY 24

10 A.M. TEPPER GALLERIES *110 East 25th Street.* Every other Saturday, Tepper Galleries conducts a marathon auction that typically includes 1,100 separate lots. The no-frills auction house deals strictly in anonymous estate liquidation. Everything surfaces here, from junk to real finds. And while the focus is eighteenth- and nineteenth-century antiques, Tepper is a regular stop for Gallagher because few of his peers attend.

Today is the preview for Saturday's auction, which includes "properties removed from the Dakota, an East 63rd Street townhouse, and various other sources." Gallagher trolls the aisles in his Ungaro trench coat. The crowd looks a bit long in the tooth. "A lot of antiques checking out a lot of other antiques," snips Gallagher. There isn't much modern stuff. Certainly no icons up for grabs. The first lot he spots is No. 958: Contemporary Abstract Wire Sculpture (presale estimate: $80–$125). Gallagher hoists one odd-looking piece. The long metal rods embedded in the base vibrate like tuning forks. "This is the kind of thing that might be nothing, or it could be a Harry Bertoia," says Gallagher. Satisfied that it isn't a Bertoia, he moves on. "Disregard the estimates; this could go for $10." He comes across lot No. 1,131: Mixed Media–Abstract Op Art (pre-sale estimate: $200–$300). The framed canvas is an Agam, but not an important one. And not very 280 Modern anyway. Gallagher sighs and makes his exit: "Maybe next time."

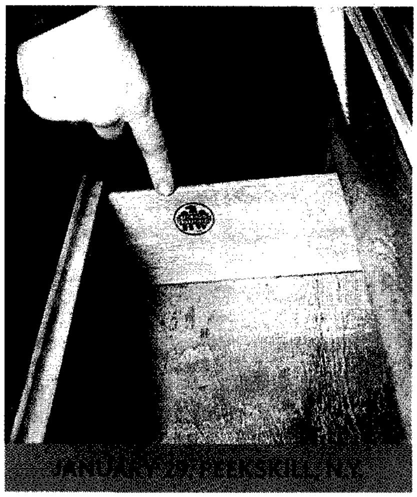
"People think I just **drive through the suburbs on garbage night** and fill up my truck."

MONDAY, JANUARY 27

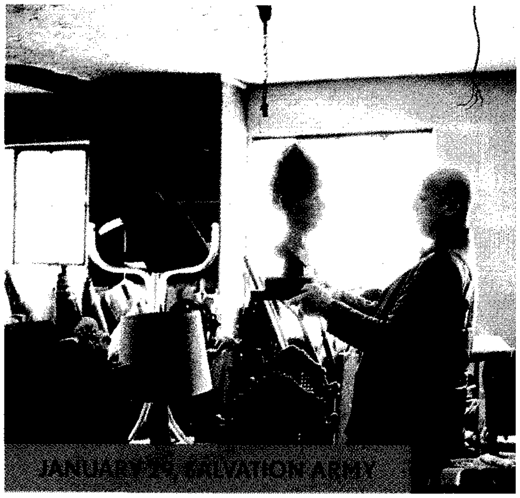
11:15 A.M. A STYLISH APARTMENT *West 72nd Street.* Gallagher is here to look over two Eames chairs. The owner called and said the chairs were in "very good condition." Price: $750 for the pair. "It's a dull purchase," says Gallagher in the cab uptown. "But they always sell." He is pleasantly surprised when he sees the chairs. They look even better than he expected. In fact, they look pristine. Still, nobody wants to pay the asking price, least of all a dealer. "You want to take six for both?" asks Gallagher. "The lowest I can go is $650," replies the owner. The transaction is so routine, it seems scripted. Gallagher glances at the chairs: "Done."

After he hands over the check, he unscrews the back supports so the chairs will fit into the trunk of a cab. Something is wrong. The chairs *are* Eames, but the rubber shock mount on one is fake. Gallagher holds up the piece of oval-shaped wood that was masquerading as rubber. He is obviously stunned but keeps his composure. "This is the best fake mount I've ever seen," he says. "The guy who did this was an artist." The owner doesn't even feign disbelief. He folds the check and slips it into his shirt pocket. Gallagher knows he has no recourse. *Caveat emptor* applies to owners of SoHo furniture boutiques, too. "Even dealers get taken now and

JANUARY 29, CROTON-ON-HUDSON



JANUARY 29, PEEKSKILL, N.Y.



JANUARY 29, SALVATION ARMY

again," Gallagher says philosophically as the elevator descends to the lobby.

NOON WILLIAM DOYLE TREASURE AUCTION *175 East 87th Street.* On to another favorite haunt. The gallery is closed as workers prepare for an auction preview. But Gallagher is allowed in because he's a regular. "This place is frequented by little old ladies with antiques stores on the Upper East Side," he says. Nothing's of interest except, perhaps, some Asian figurines. On his way out, he rummages through a large cardboard box filled with clothes. Clearly pumped, he pulls out several scarlet garments. "They might be sacred Tibetan robes," he gushes. But when he turns one robe around, there is a large number 12 stitched on the back. "Then again, they might just be warm-up suits for a soccer team."

12:15 P.M. IRVINGTON INSTITUTE THRIFT SHOP *1534 Second Avenue, at 80th Street.* Several years ago, Gallagher found a rare Arte-Luce lamp here for $200. He immediately went around the corner and flipped it to another dealer for $2,000. The merchandise is mostly clothes, everything from Brooks Brothers tuxes to cheap summer dresses. Lots of bad furniture. Nothing remotely 280 Modern here. Gallagher is in and out in three minutes.

12:40 P.M. MANHATTAN ART & ANTIQUES CENTER *1050 Second Avenue, at 55th Street.* This sprawling three-floor complex houses numerous shops, most of no interest to Gallagher. But there are a few that carry tribal art; Gallagher has been collecting pieces since he was a child and has a display case filled with South Pacific art in the store. At gallery No. 76, he scores. For $25, he buys a penis sheath from New Guinea. "It's a goof," says Gallagher of his purchase. "But the workmanship is extraordinary."

At Glückselig Antiques (gallery No. 90), Gallagher fondles an armband from New Guinea fashioned out of what appears to be tortoiseshell. The owner informs him that the band is actually a distressed resin and demonstrates how Sotheby's tests for genuine tortoiseshell. (A pin is heated with a match and placed against the material in question. If you get a whiff of plastic, you got conned.) "I got fooled on this, and it cost me a lot of money," says Kurt Glückselig. "Happens to the best of us," Gallagher replies.

2:20 P.M. GOTHAM GALLERIES *80 Fourth Avenue, between 10th and 11th Streets.* The last stop of the day is Gotham Galleries, a place that pickers claim will buy anything that's not broken. Pickers are the hunter-gatherers of the trade—they match dealers with objects they find anywhere from yard sales to thrift shops.

Here are antiques by the pound. But as at any other low-rent furniture shop, a great piece can be found on any given day. A pair of German armoires dating from the thirties is stashed in the back. Gallagher has been monitoring them for the past several weeks. They fit the 280 Modern profile but are far too expensive: $750 apiece. Refinishing and transportation would cost another grand, so they'd have to retail for more than $3,000, a bit steep for a product sans pedigree. Gallagher has been waiting for the price to drop, and it *will,* just not today.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29

NOON CROTON-ON-HUDSON, N.Y. Gallagher has received a call from a woman who says she has access to a warehouse that was sealed for fifteen years. A picker who knows this part of Westchester confirms that it's worth checking out. Gallagher has agreed to make the trip because he's been promised the first look. After a 90-minute drive, he discovers that not only has the warehouse been open for three days to pickers and dealers, but it's swimming with worthless bric-a-brac. Gallagher is surprisingly coolheaded—bum steers often come his way. The only modern pieces are two broken-down fiberglass-shell Eames chairs useful merely for spare parts. He takes the pair for $10. But on the way out, Gallagher notices a patch of crimson mohair partially concealed by several moldy mattresses. It's a magnificent Gothic tieback couch from the twenties, a real score. Gallagher cuts a check for $400. Back in Manhattan, he thinks, the monster piece could sell for $3,000. "I may even keep it for my own apartment," he says. "It reminds me of *The Addams Family.*"

12:40 P.M. CROTON-ON-HUDSON Gallagher pulls over at the local Salvation Army, where a Wakefield console is tagged at $69. In New York, it would be snatched up immediately at three times the price. Gallagher asks how long it's been on the floor. "A month," says the salesperson. This Salvation Army is relatively undiscovered, and Gallagher makes a mental note to return.

2:30 P.M. PEEKSKILL, N.Y. Certain small towns upstate seem to harbor an inordinate amount of modern furniture: Nyack, Tarrytown, Cold Spring, Beacon, Hudson. But today, Gallagher is in Peekskill. "I used to waste a lot of time traveling to Chicago and Los Angeles before I realized that most of the great

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JANUARY 29, THE SOUTH BRONX

modern furniture is right here in my own backyard," he says. "All the sophisticated people in the country with a penchant for Marshmallow sofas and Cone chairs lived in New York. Eventually, a lot of them moved out of the city to little towns like this one." That said, he walks into the local used-book store to peruse the design section. The most intriguing title is *The Machine,* an exhibition catalogue with a metal jacket that chronicled a groundbreaking exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in 1968. But priced at $75, it's no bargain. Walking back to his car, Gallagher scans the block looking for anything that might merit further investigation: a light fixture in an abandoned commercial space, vases in a mom-and-pop flower shop, a desk lamp in the office of a gas station. "Great pieces aren't always found at thrift stores and auctions," he says. "Frequently, they hide out in the most unlikely places."

> **"Great pieces aren't always found at thrift stores and auctions," says Gallagher. "Frequently, they hide out in the most unlikely places."**

4:50 P.M. THE BRONX Certain parts of the Bronx can seem quite ominous—particularly if it's raining and dark outside (as it is now). The section of the South Bronx that Rick Gallagher visits weekly is such a neighborhood. Graffiti-spattered walls, carcasses of buildings, gang members hanging out on deserted stoops in "Da Face" down parkas. Not a nice place to take an early-evening stroll. But if some decent furniture is to be had, anything can be justified. Gallagher remembers the Paul Frankel Skyscraper bookcase he found concealed under some musty mattresses in a favorite Bronx secondhand shop. He explains how important furniture finds itself in such dire circumstances: "From the thirties to the fifties, there were a lot of wealthy Jewish neighborhoods in the Bronx, especially off the Grand Concourse. Apartment houses and office lobbies were outfitted with Donald Deskey consoles, WPA-style murals, and amazing wall sconces. A lot of this furniture is still lurking around the neighborhood."

But it's a far cry from Madison Avenue. On one recent visit, Gallagher was talking to a furniture dealer when he noticed the red dot of a laser pointed at the dealer's groin. The laser was attached to a gun which was being aimed by a young man with a high fade standing on the curb across the street. "Occupational hazard, I guess," says Gallagher. "I didn't stick around waiting for him to quote me prices."

American Antiques & Furniture at 430 East 188th Street is typical of the South Bronx. Stock is displayed on the sidewalk in the same way commercial kitchen equipment is laid out on the Bowery, and dealers pick over the artifacts hungrily. On the sidewalk, in front of a cinder-block wall, sits a Tommy Parzinger console ($54). Inside, several bilingual signs spell out the store policy: ALL SALES ARE FINAL. NO CASH REFUNDS. One funguslike Saarinen table lurks in the back of the store. "Cheap," says the salesman. "Fake," replies Gallagher. He shows why the table couldn't possibly have come from Knoll (it doesn't have a beveled edge and a screw-on top).

Next stop: F&J Furniture at 1007 Tiffany Street (at Westchester Avenue, near 165th Street), The manager, Francisco Penafiel, admits he carries junk, but he also has a $3,000 Spanish Colonial piece that Sotheby's has inquired after and a $4,000 Moorish desk and chair. "It's nice to have good furniture for people like Rick," says Penafiel. "But I make much more money selling the cheap stuff. On the weekend, I can make $1,500 just selling clothes and dishes."

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2

4:30 A.M. 26TH STREET FLEA MARKET Most New Yorkers never make it to the 26th Street flea market before 10 A.M. This is unfortunate, because most great pieces have been purchased and hauled away by 7:30. The serious dealers arrive as early as 3:30 in the summer months. In the winter, 4:30 is pretty standard.

At this hour, people wielding flashlights are peering into the backs of trucks, purchasing furniture before it is even unloaded. This morning, Charles Brown, a dealer in Pound Ridge, snagged five Eames chairs (with original rubber shock mounts) for $1,500 and an entire truckload (seven pieces) of Paul McCobb "Planer Group" modular furniture for $700—all before 4 A.M. Even at the relatively late hour of 5:30 A.M., there was a Warren McArthur chair for $45. (Yes, it was from his later and less significant Mayfair period, but it's still McArthur.)

Robert Loughlin, considered by many to be the best picker in the city (he's the guy who found the Dalí painting at a Salvation Army store on Spring Street several years ago), says 26th Street is still the country's premier flea market: "I used to walk off with every piece of Gibbings and Dunbar. But then, ten years ago, all these books started getting published, and kids suddenly became educated. Now the place is crawling with Eames queens."

Gallagher and Loughlin are good friends. Sick with the flu, Gallagher shows up late—6:30 A.M. Loughlin tells Rick about a couple of Florence Knoll chairs unloaded earlier that he might be interested in. Rick passes. It isn't all that unusual to come away empty-

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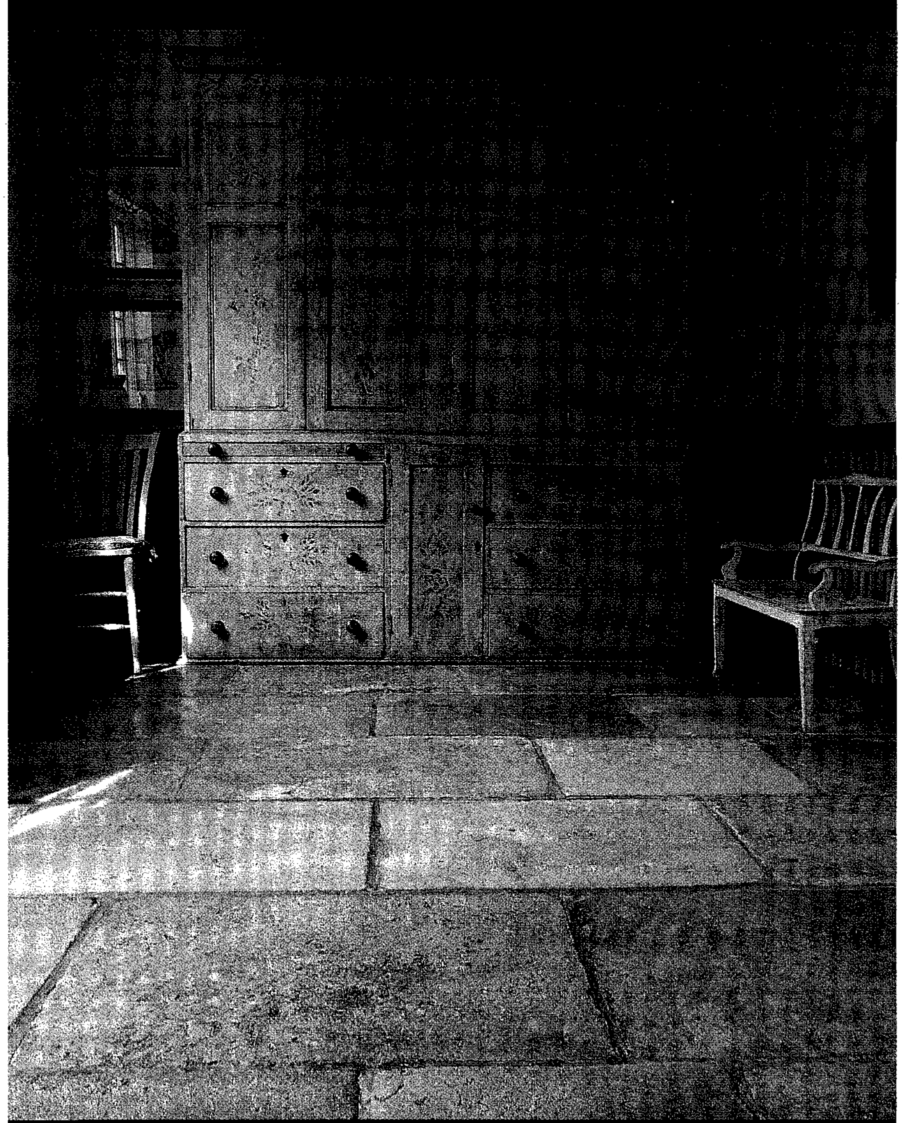

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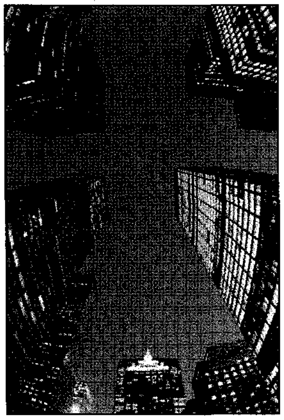

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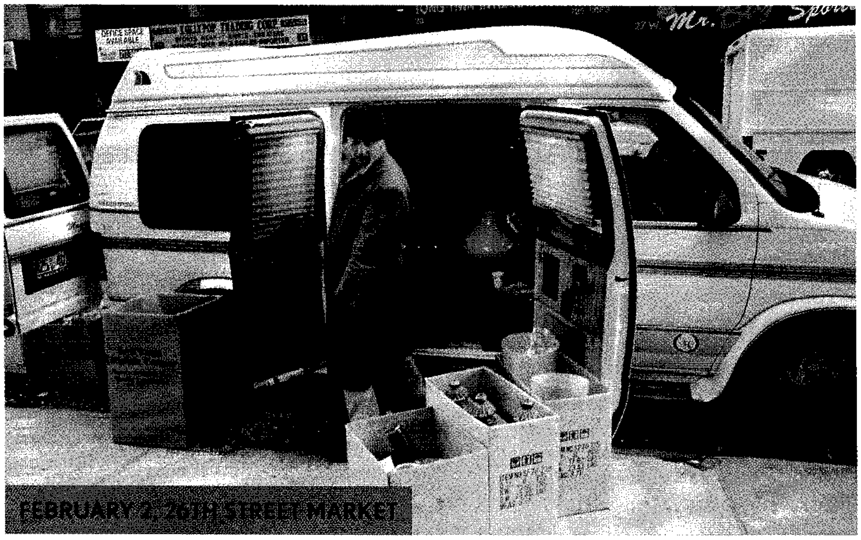

FEBRUARY 2, 26TH STREET MARKET

handed. Anyway, things can get very competitive: You can be haggling with a dealer over a chest of drawers, and someone will come up behind you and yell, "First refusal!" If you don't buy it, that person gets first dibs. The inevitable consequence is that the dealer will insist on a higher price.

Walking past an open van, Gallagher notices some glass lamps—Venini, from the fifties and sixties, colorful and weirdly shaped. At 7:45, he buys two for $100 each. This is "NOS" (new old stock). The Venini tags are still attached. Gallagher notices a Brooklyn address on the packing crate, and the following day, he heads for the store, where he finds twenty more: "It was like unearthing King Tut's tomb."

At the 26th Street flea market, **most of the best stuff is gone by 7:30 A.M.** Serious dealers arrive as early as 3:30, brandishing flashlights.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3

1:15 P.M. 280 MODERN Gallagher receives a phone call from a picker named Jere Bernard. Bernard saw four chairs at a shop in Pennsylvania with 1939 World's Fair stickers on the bottoms. Does Rick want them? "Of course!" Bernard snaps up the chairs for $500. When they are delivered the following day, Gallagher notes the customs tags: MADE IN FINLAND. Rick consults a June 1939 issue of *The Architectural Forum* in his library in the back. He finds a photo of that year's Finnish Pavilion, and there are the chairs. The designer is Alvar Aalto. These are four of 83 chairs custom-made for the Pavilion. Gallagher sells them two days later for $5,000.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8

4:15 P.M. TEPPER GALLERIES Tepper auctions used to be strictly for wholesalers. But that's all changing. Celebrity estate auctions have served only to jack up prices—just one more thing for dealers to complain about. Nobody wants to lose out on a Stickley desk to a housewife from Bayonne. Still, Gallagher enjoys attending auctions. Sotheby's Arcade and Christie's East are musts. Sotheby's and Christie's typically don't sell objects appraised below $2,000 or furniture below $5,000. Sales in their second-tier arcade branches still have previews, paddles, and catalogues, but individual lots can go for as little as $100. And not infrequently, things slip under the appraiser's radar. "We make occasional mistakes," concedes Greg Kuharic, the vice-president of Sotheby's twentieth-century-decorative-arts department. Many of these lots eventually end up in SoHo boutiques, or at the Armory and Pier shows. But with no arcade sales for a couple of weeks, Gallagher heads to Tepper. At the preview, he had his eye on a metal Paul Evans credenza with a slate top (presale estimate: $150–$200). It is by far the best Evans piece he has ever seen, and he believes he has a good chance of landing it.

Robert Isabell and Oribe, both serious Evans collectors, aren't in the blue-hair-and-toupees Tepper crowd. But just as the bidding is about to commence, it's announced that the presale estimate was a typo. It should have read $1,500 to $2,000. Gallagher slaps his hat across his thigh in disgust. Bidding escalates rapidly. When it reaches $2,500, Gallagher turns his attention to the New York *Times* crossword puzzle. The credenza eventually goes for $9,500. "Another designer championed by 280 Modern who I can no longer afford to buy," sighs Gallagher on the way out.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17

5:15 P.M. 280 MODERN Gallagher is minding the store. Mondays are usually slow, but today is President's Day, and the foot traffic on Lafayette Street is heavy. And, of course, there's the new Venini window display. "My most successful yet," says Gallagher proudly. Jim Elkind of Lost City Arts, directly across the street from 280 Modern, has already come by to admire the window. This afternoon, Gallagher sold six of the Veninis. Another trend is launched.

Gallagher is distracted. His landlord has mentioned that there will be "a significant rent increase." Gallagher already pays $7,200 a month. But there is always someone else who will pay more. Competition for prime space on the strip is fierce, and Gallagher is situated perfectly, just north of Prince. He was a pioneer on Lafayette, one of the first to envision the potential of being "adjacent SoHo."

Today, Lafayette Street is more SoHo than SoHo. At last count, there were twenty stores specializing in vintage modern furnishings. Even shops that don't sell furniture are part of the collective design vibe. X-Large, a hip-hop clothing store that caters to skateboarders, sells Eames-chair baseball caps and T-shirts that pay homage to Herman Miller.

A woman from New Jersey insists on showing Gallagher some Polaroids of "my sister's fabulous Deco bedroom suite." The pieces are bad—so bad that Gallagher has a tough time keeping a straight face. He is gracious and suggests she pay a visit to Gotham Galleries. After they leave, Gallagher says, "Nine-point-nine times out of ten, people bring you absolute crap, pickers included. That's why I have to go out myself and get it. Even if I inherited $10 million and retired tomorrow. I'd still be doing the same thing I do today: I'd be driving around looking for stuff." ■

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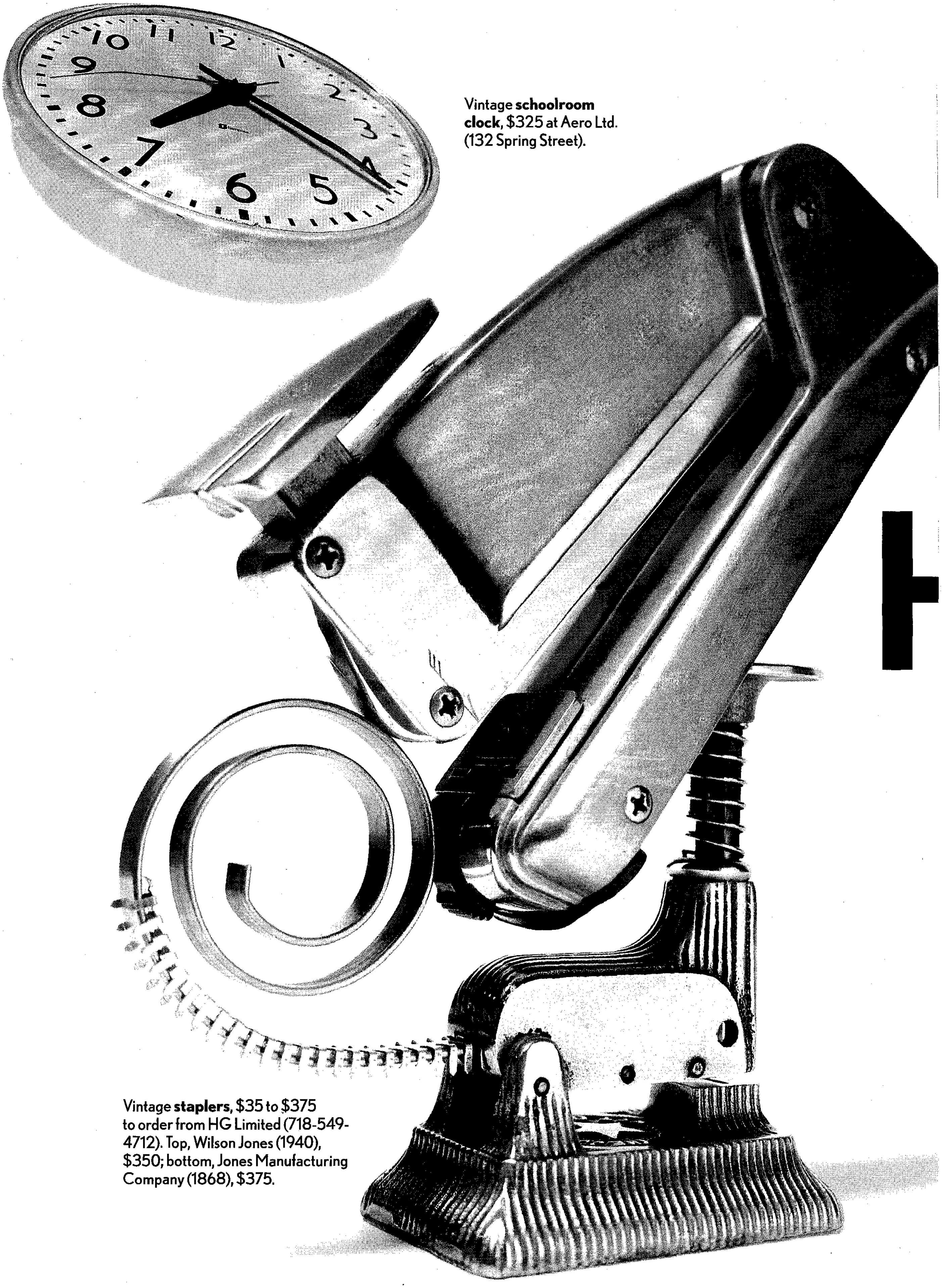
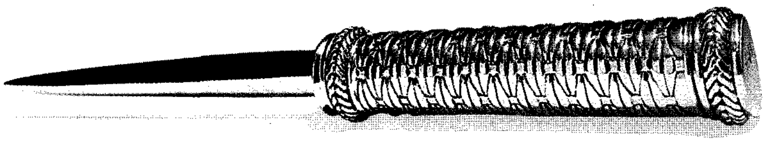


Vintage **schoolroom clock**, $325 at Aero Ltd. (132 Spring Street).

Vintage **staplers**, $35 to $375 to order from HG Limited (718-549-4712). Top, Wilson Jones (1940), $350; bottom, Jones Manufacturing Company (1868), $375.

Mobil storage unit by Kartell, $675 at Moss (146 Greene Street).

Sterling-silver **letter opener** by John Hardy, $480 at Saks Fifth Avenue.



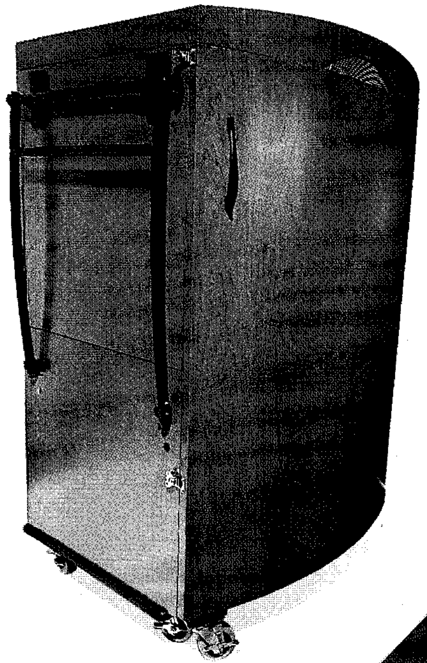
You no longer leave the house to report for work. But that doesn't mean you have to clone that corporate-drone cubicle you left behind.

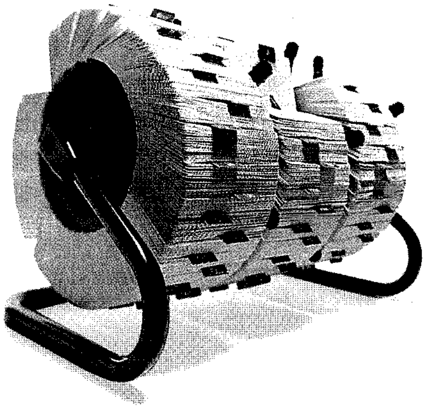
OME ALONE

BANKERS' HOURS, A TEN-SECOND COMMUTE, and every day a casual Friday. Not to mention that perfectly legit tax deduction on rent. Working out of your house does have its advantages. Is it any wonder that one in five Americans works from home full-time? This is no passing fad; it's a megatrend, the kind of thing Faith Popcorn prattles on about. Nowhere is this more evident than in New York, a city where millions of jobs (from Madison Avenue to Wall Street) can be performed

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MARK WEISS

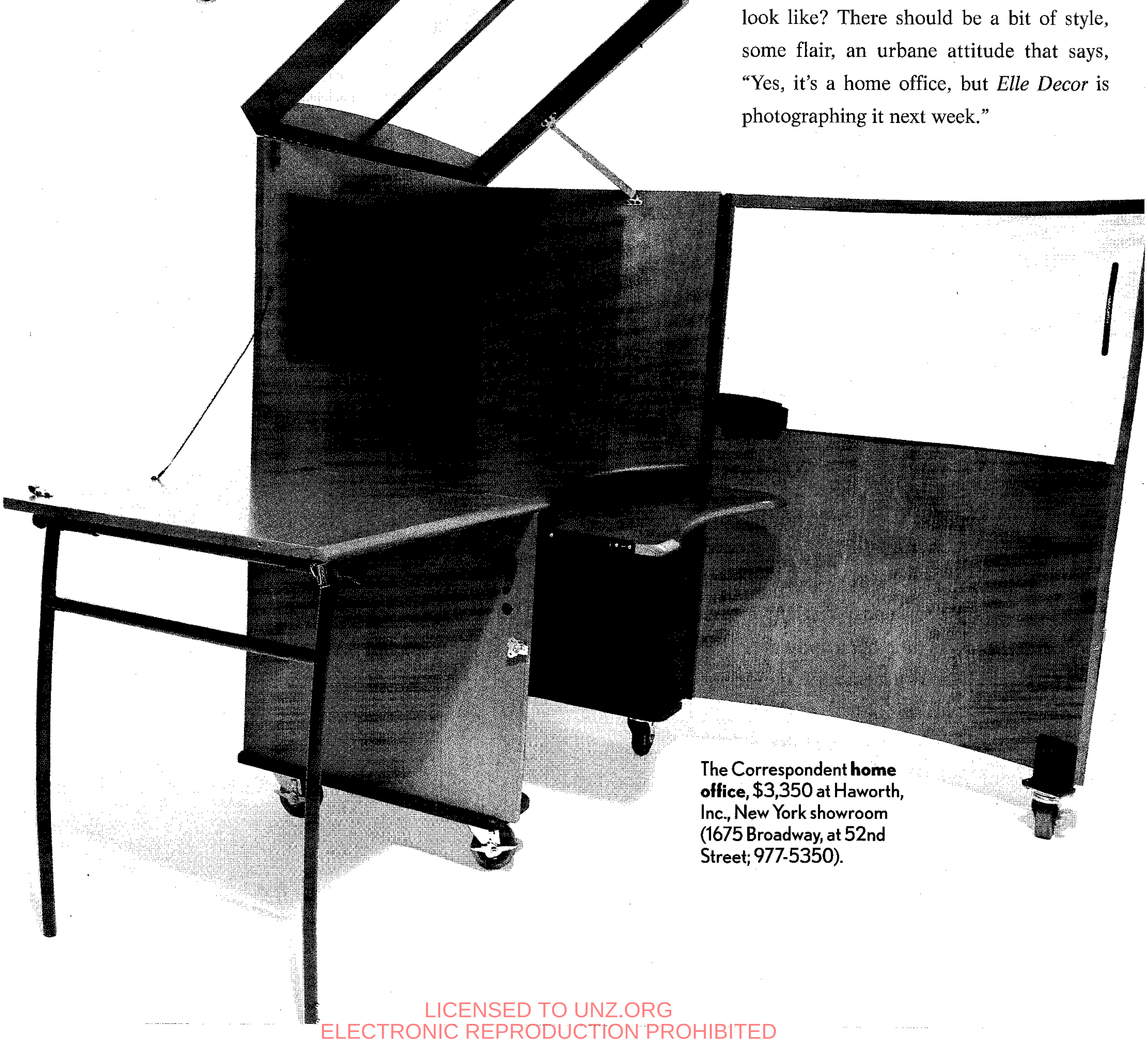
Ergonomic **Aeron chair** by Herman Miller, $1,093 at ABC Carpet & Home (888 Broadway, at 19th Street).





Godzilla **6,000-card Rolodex** (model 6024X), $230 to order from Rolodex (800-727-7656).

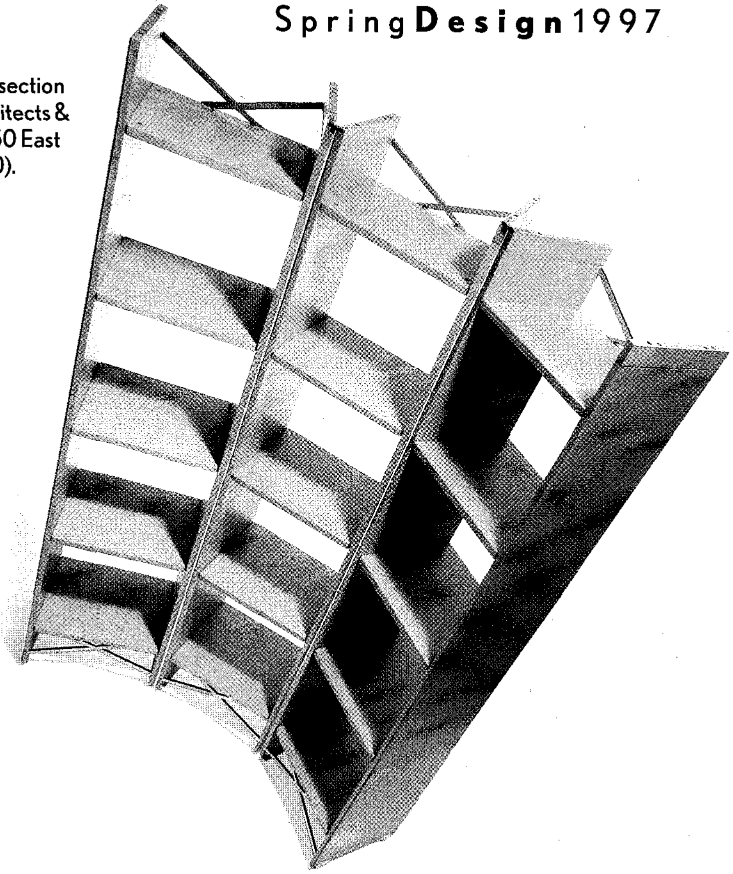
anywhere you can plug in a computer and a fax-modem. ■ That said, it's only a matter of time before all of us are fielding telephone calls from corporate headquarters in our pajamas. But what will our home offices look like? There should be a bit of style, some flair, an urbane attitude that says, "Yes, it's a home office, but *Elle Decor* is photographing it next week."



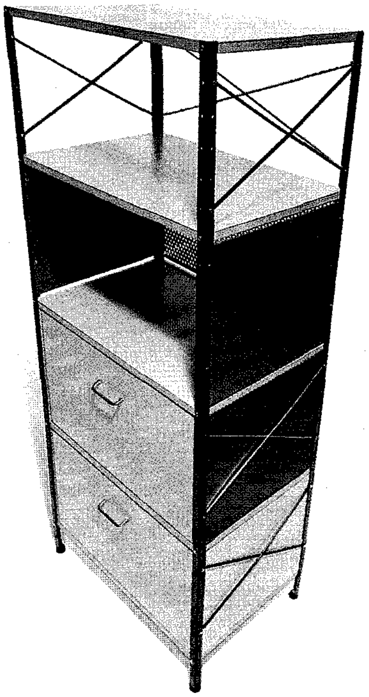
The Correspondent **home office**, $3,350 at Haworth, Inc., New York showroom (1675 Broadway, at 52nd Street; 977-5350).

Bestlite table lamp, $420 to order from Baldinger Architectural Lighting (718-204-5700).

Beechwood **Fluxus bookcase,** $880 per section at Poliform in the Architects & Designers Building (150 East 58th Street; 421-1220).

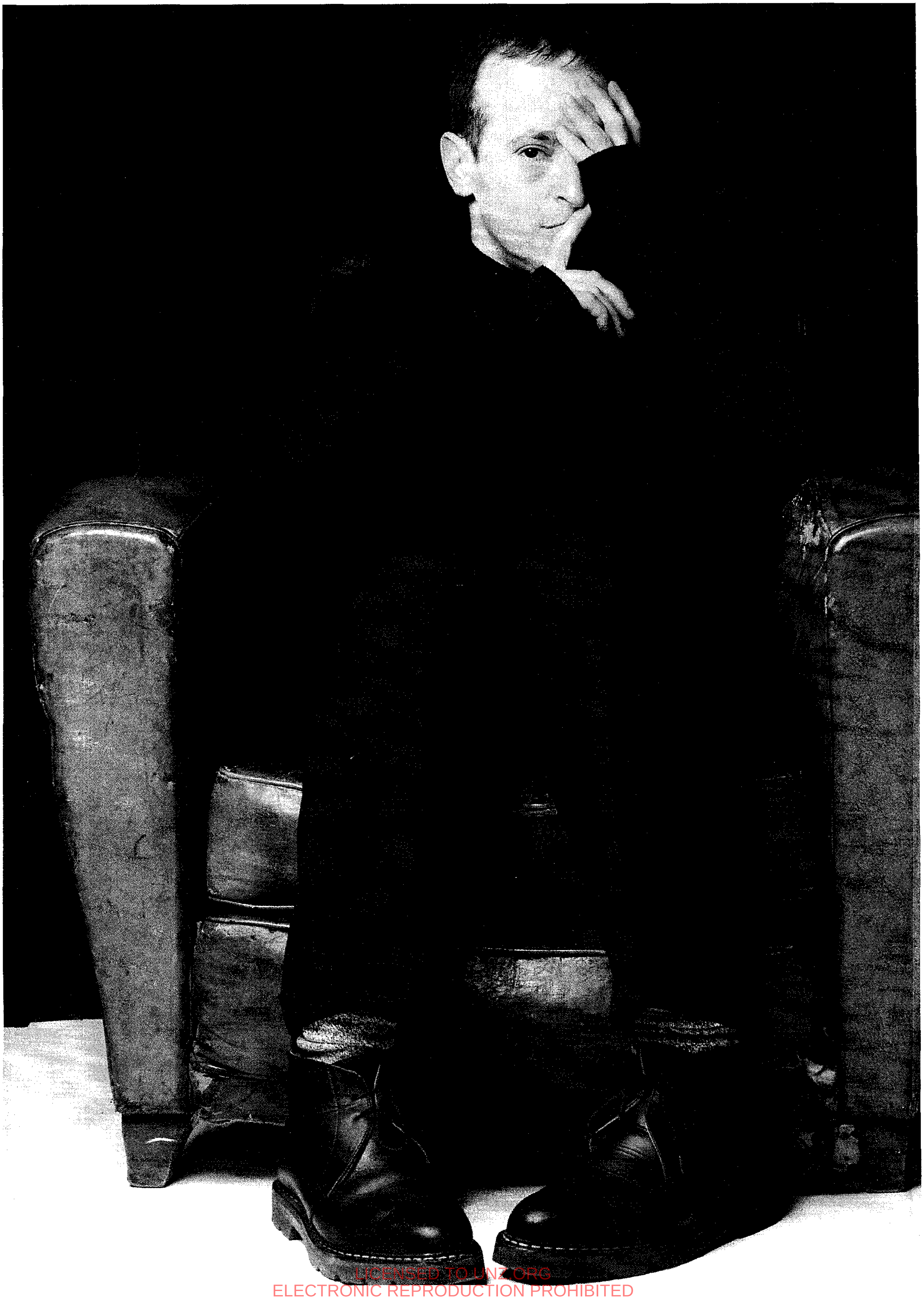


Get things started with Darth Vader's ergonomic chair, the mother of all Rolodexes, and vintage staplers you won't find at Staples.



Eames Storage Unit, $1,202 at Modernica (57 Greene Street).

Concrete **Petra Desk Set** puzzle, $152 (not including tape dispenser, $39) to order from Alec Drummond (718-643-9571).

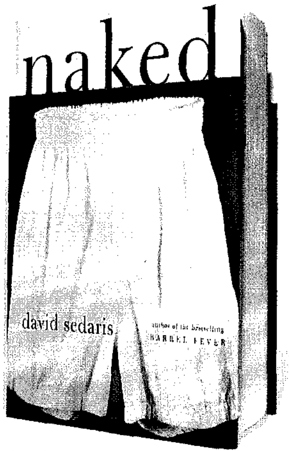


PRESENT LAUGHTER

Playwright, author, radio star, and retired elf **DAVID SEDARIS** may be the most brilliantly witty New Yorker since Dorothy Parker. Just ask his father. By Helen Eisenbach

IT'S 3 A.M., AND DAVID SEDARIS HAS MADE A DECISION. THE preternaturally boyish author is getting a ride home from a sold-out performance of *The Little Freida Mysteries,* a tale of desperate love and doll furniture written with his sister Amy. Realizing he's the oldest person in the van, he says, "Now that I'm 40, there'll be no more wearing jeans or eating dip. That's for the young people."

In fact, it would be hard to find someone more in touch with a child's pure, unadulterated delight in his surroundings and experiences than Sedaris. And these days, the only thing the cult playwright–comic essayist–radio performer seems to be forgoing is the opportunity to accept vast amounts of money from the film and TV executives who flock to him at every manifestation of his uniquely demented voice.



> *The first time I met my future brother-in-law, he was visiting my parents' home and had his head deep in the oven. I walked into the kitchen and, mistaking him for one of my sisters, grabbed his plump, denim-clad bottom and proceeded to knead it with both hands. He panicked, smacking his head against the oven's crusty ceiling. "Oh golly," I said, "I'm sorry. I thought you were Lisa."*
>
> *It was the truth, but for whatever reason, it failed to comfort him.*
>
> —from "Ashes" in *Naked*

David Sedaris became a writer the usual way: He worked as an elf, then for a moving company, then as a maid. The latter occupation he continued well after literary fame struck, though housework grew stickier after customers started calling for reasons other than his cleaning ability. (One woman called to say, "I heard you on that Terry Gross show and decided you would be the perfect birthday present for my son!") This month, when he tours with his second book, *Naked,* radio interviewers are less likely to invite listeners to call in for tips on "getting port-wine stains out of the terry-cloth poncho," as they did on his last tour. Now that publishing deadlines have cured his inability to write during daylight, a trail of bereft housecleaning clients has been superseded by an increasingly large pool of readers eager to enjoy the fruits of his literary labors.

Sedaris, who fuses a skewed wit with the sincere, well-scrubbed good manners of a Boy Scout leader, became a writer almost by accident. Though he wanted to be a visual artist, he says, "I had no talent that way whatsoever." Then, "out of nowhere," he started reading contemporary fiction—"everything I could get my hands on"—and found himself unexpectedly haunted: "I would memorize whole paragraphs from stories and be riding my bike just playing them through my head, wishing I had written them." He started keeping a diary; soon he would resent anything that took

PHOTOGRAPHED BY NIGEL PARRY
FOR *NEW YORK*

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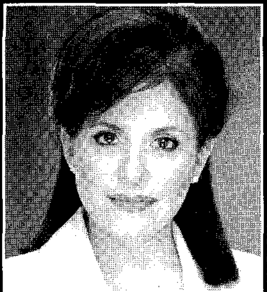

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Comic relief: In *Naked,* Sedaris serves up life unfiltered.

him away from it. "I never go anywhere," he says. "I don't go to restaurants, I don't go to parties, because I just hate to give up that work. If I'm sitting at the typewriter in the evening and somebody calls crying, I think I'm going to make a note to try to call back tomorrow." He smiles ruefully. "It's just not a quality you want in a friend."

Growing up in Raleigh, North Carolina, Sedaris knew from the age of 7 that he wanted to live in New York. ("I'm from Empire City," boasts one character in *Freida* to another, "where a man like you couldn't talk a newborn baby out of a filthy diaper.") The city of his childhood dreams would live up to its promise. On arriving, he discovered the legendary downtown theater La Mama; going on opening night to a gender-twisting show with lesbians and British clown drag queens, Sedaris was transfixed: "I'd never seen anything like it." If he was dazzled by what he saw onstage, what he noticed offstage—people there purely to promote their own shows and cultivate the management—shocked him. "It is a skill and it takes a lot of energy to do that, but sometimes I think, *Well, that's your skill. Just be a publicist.*" That La Mama would offer Sedaris its space after one performance of his work (*Freida* is their fifth joint production) is a tribute to something rarer than pushiness. "If David had one scintilla the killer instinct that he has talent," says Sedaris cast staple David Rakoff, "we'd all be dead and New York would be in ruins."

In an era of brazen self-promotion, Sedaris seems almost a freak, a throwback to a kinder (possibly imaginary) time when artists were rewarded purely for their talent and anyone who approached them was treated with the same unfailing politeness, no matter how little (or much) he offered. "I'm incapable of making anything happen on my own," says Sedaris, who explains each success as a matter of luck, even accident. Sedaris was reading in Chicago several years ago when NPR producer Ira Glass happened to be in the audience; two years later, after the writer moved to New York, Glass called to ask whether he had anything "Christmassy" for a local show. Sedaris recorded "The SantaLand Diaries," detailing the experiences of a person who can't find more dignified employment than tending to an unruly Macy's public while dressed in an elf costume. (When a cute elf flirted with him, he soon found he wasn't the only one being dizzied by the man's attentions: "Snowball just leads elves on, elves and Santas. He is playing a dangerous game.") NPR liked the piece enough to ask him back; publishers came calling.

"David's worldview is dark yet charitable," says Rakoff, who was an editor at HarperCollins at the time he first heard "SantaLand." "I walked to work in a cloud and wrote him that day." Rakoff didn't get to publish Sedaris, but he did befriend him. "You move to New York with all these dreams; you think, *I wonder what it would have been like to know Dorothy Parker?*—a writer not known for being a good time off the page—"and then you meet someone like David, someone unique and charming and delightful."

Besides a theater, New York also provided Sedaris a mate: artist Hugh Hamrick, whom the writer met while borrowing a ladder with a friend. "I just looked at him and I was, 'You . . . will . . . be . . . my . . . boyfriend,' " Sedaris says, making his voice hypnotic. "I left little notes all around his apartment, to show him that basically I'd been through all his things already." The ease with which he inserts homosexuality into his readings (aided by uncanny powers of mimicry and an eerily innocent delivery that leave audiences breathless with laughter) is unusual, but Sedaris knows how lucky he is to be living in a time when writers don't have to put their sexuality in code. "It's easy to

Book photograph, previous page, by Wayne Simpson.

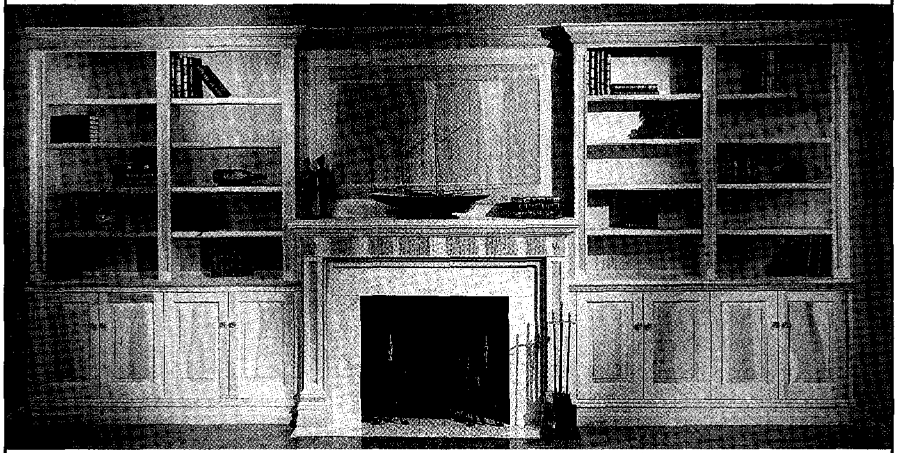
forget—living in New York, you just take it for granted." he says sweetly. His audiences run the gamut. "In North Carolina, I grew up reading about heterosexual couples and their stories," he says. "That's all there was to read, so it seems kind of unfair that a heterosexual person wouldn't give it a go."

Sedaris's work is a family affair; Hamrick designs the breathtaking sets and wry promotional art for his shows; not only is sister Amy muse and collaborator, but the entire family provides rich material for his fiction. "Is there any worse fate for a parent than a child with a typewriter?" notes Sedaris. His mother, who died before seeing her faith in her son confirmed, emerges as a unique character in his new book. In quite a different way, so does his father. The man who boasts about his son in airports when baggage handlers ask for a name ("Maybe you've heard of my son?" "*Nooo*, Dad, he hasn't") has affected a transformation his son finds somewhat unsettling: "You live with someone's shame for so long that when you get the pride, you just want the shame back. It's the pride that'll kill you."

If his first book, *Barrel Fever*, affirmed his reputation as a comic force of twisted nature, *Naked* should add a darker layer to his fame. A collection of autobiographical stories "prone to exaggeration," *Naked* at its best manages to be both funny and profound, finding emotional truth in wild embellishments. If praise embarrasses him (the New York *Times* piece that first trumpeted his gifts "sounded boastful"), Sedaris enjoys those who speak their minds, like the woman at one reading who declared that he had no right to complain about being called a "faggot" when "obviously you enjoy making fun of retarded people." Acknowledging that someone exists is not the same as mocking him, Sedaris replied. ("You know, when I'm making fun of retarded people, I'm not talking about you specifically," he refrained from adding.) He recounts with delight his seventh-grade English teacher's comment when her husband refused to read *Fever* to her after scanning a few pages. "You know, you never were my best student," she told him.

Sedaris's play ends the week his book tour begins, and his future promises to be more of the same, a faithful continuation of his writing, seven days a week. "I don't know anyone who works as hard as David," says his sister. "He's always been so disciplined, ever since he was little." It's easy to believe Sedaris when he says that if he'd never gotten the call that started it all, "I'd still be plugging along. You can't give up. Whether your book is published or not, you're not going to stop writing. It just wouldn't do." ■

The Truth About Our Bookcases



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Lost in America

He's a Soviet expatriate turned New Yorker whose surreal, obsessive installations mourning the loss of identity have been acclaimed all over the world. So what do the curators of the Whitney Biennial see in Ilya Kabakov? An American artist.

By Amei Wallach

ILYA KABAKOV DOES NOT EXACTLY KNOW where he lives. This has nothing to do with where he has lived in the past—in Dnepropetrovsk in the Ukraine, where he was born in 1933; or in Samarkand, where he spent his World War II boyhood evacuated to a peasant's mud-brick hut; or in Moscow, where he went to art school in the Stalin-era fifties, and in the sixties, seventies, and eighties became the spiritual father to the underground artists known as Moscow Conceptualists. It is simply literally true that Kabakov can't remember the address of the TriBeCa loft where he has lived for the past five years. ■ "Look in his pocket," says his wife, Emilia, "because he has a piece of paper with his address and telephone number on it. He calls me when it is time to come home." ■ We're at the Empire Diner in

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANDREW GARN
FOR NEW YORK

Chelsea, where the Kabakovs are taking a break from installing his current exhibition, "The Life of Flies," at the nearby Barbara Gladstone Gallery. Emilia has just taken from the waitress and handed to Kabakov the cup of chicken soup she ordered for him. He personally spoke up for a bottle of New Amsterdam beer, though he had to break off from diagramming the source of cosmic energy to do so. (The source of cosmic energy, in case you're wondering, is the soul. But more on that later.)

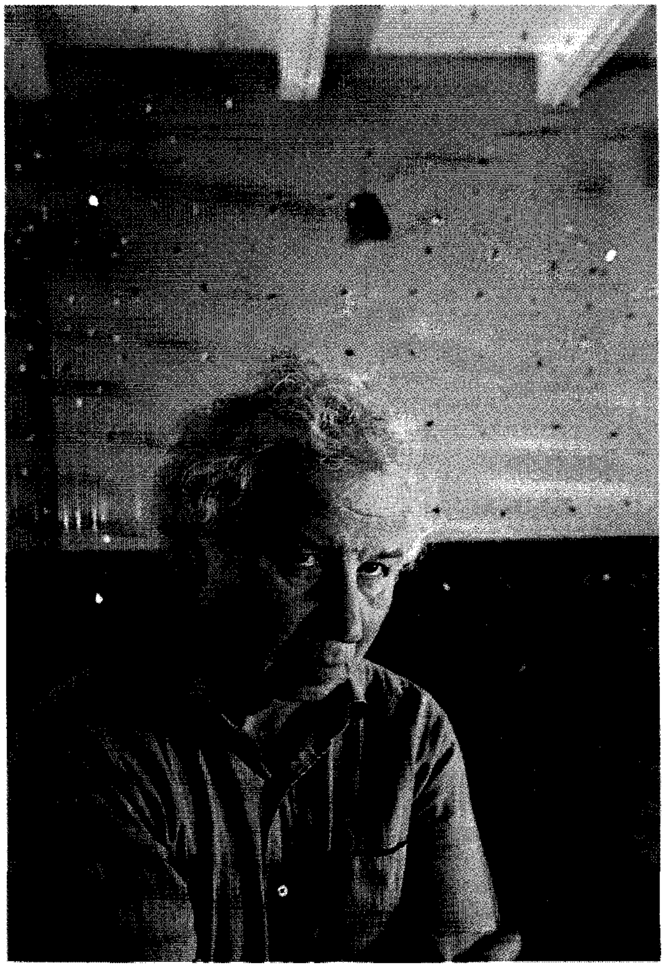
Kabakov himself might be too focused on the endless proliferation of ideas that keep popping out of his head to remember his exact address—particularly when Emilia is around to pick up the slack. But the Whitney Museum of American Art knows where he lives: His address is New York City, and he has become an American artist—American enough to be included in the Whitney's 1997 Biennial, which opens March 20.

Kabakov hasn't set foot in Russia since 1989 and has yet to have a public exhibit there (the closest he ever came was a one-night stand in 1968 with his friend Eric Bulatov at Moscow's Blue Bird Cafe, which the underground artists invited to show there assumed was a covert KGB operation). And he's never exactly considered himself Russian, because on the internal passport Soviet citizens had to carry back then, he was designated "#5" for Jewish, not Russian.

Still, he's best known for the magical walk-in installations that introduce us to the daily double binds in the life of the Soviet little man. The surreal rooms-upon-rooms that Kabakov creates and fills with his kid's-coloring-book versions of generic furniture, with his paintings, slides, and storytelling texts, suggest crowded apartments, schoolrooms, orphanages, mental institutions, hospitals, government offices. Enter his absurd, horrific world, and you feel yourself in the hands of an all-powerful but incompetent bureaucracy—not just Soviet but universal, in a Keystone Cops kind of way. Anyone who has ever tried to deal with the New York Housing Authority or renew a driver's license will get the picture.

"ONE OF THE REASONS I'M SO PROUD TO HAVE ILYA IN THE SHOW IS that I feel very strongly that he's one of the most important artists to emerge anywhere in the postwar era," says David Ross, director of the Whitney Museum. "I think he is on the level of Rauschenberg and Johns, and the fact that he emerged in relative obscurity has only delayed our appreciation of his qualities. When I first encountered Ilya in 1979, it was like encountering this completely developed brilliant artist who had developed outside the overview of us in the West. It was like stumbling into a great treasure."

The fact is, the art world has increasingly become a traveling circus—take Kabakov's friends, the art duo Komar & Melamid, who have lived here for twenty years but will be representing Russia this summer at the Venice Biennale (as Kabakov did four years ago). "We're the first Americans to represent Russia," quips Alexander Melamid. A shifting cast of international art stars is regularly invited to exhibit at biennials and international expositions in Italy, Brazil, Australia, South Africa, Germany, Japan, etc.—and almost since he arrived in the West in the late eighties, Kabakov has been a member of this elite troupe. The place he has shown least—and is least known—is the United States; his only New York museum appearance was in Robert Storr's 1991 exhibition of installations, "Dislocations," at the Museum of Modern Art. But he's already had big one-man shows at the Pompidou in Paris and the Stedelijk in Amsterdam, and he's held in such high esteem in Germany that a recent exhibition of Russian avant-garde painting at Cologne's Ludwig Museum was called "From Malevich to Kabakov." The triple whammy of the Gladstone Gallery show, the Whitney Biennial, and "Monument to a Lost Glove," a public sculpture that goes on view today outside the Flatiron Building, is one way to achieve critical mass here.

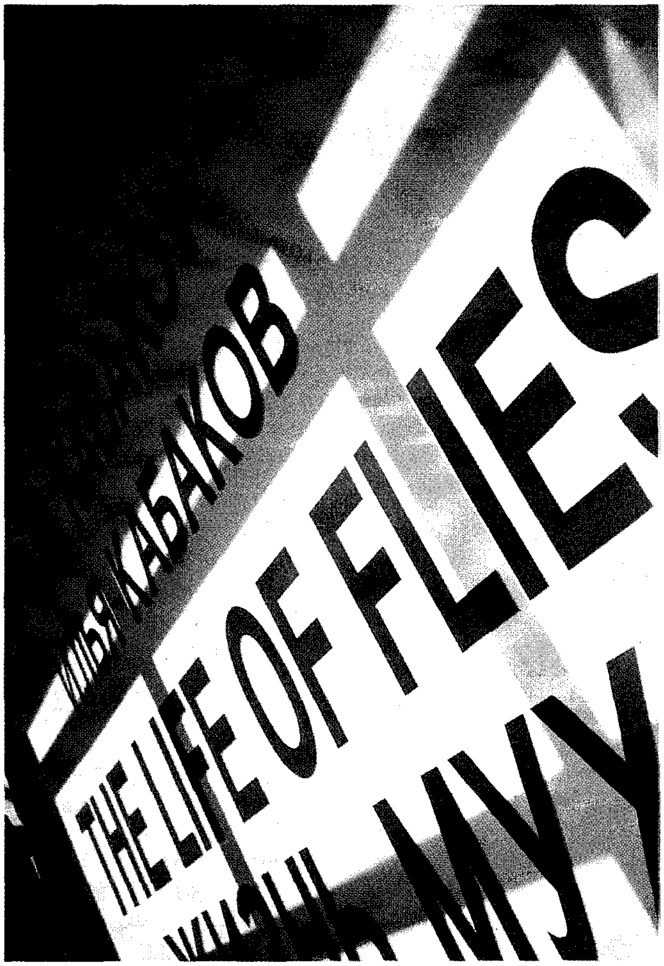


LORD OF THE FLIES: KABAKOV AT HIS BARBARA GLADSTONE GALLERY INSTALLATION. (DETAIL, RIGHT.)

To Kabakov, the invitation to show in the Whitney Biennial is hardly a matter of Americanization. It's a matter of citizenship in the art world, he says—the way Spaniards Picasso and Miró lived in the art world centered in Paris at the start of the century, or the Armenian Arshile Gorky and the Dutchman Willem de Kooning helped create the art world of New York in the forties.

Kabakov and I have spoken German, the only language we have in common, since the 1987 autumn day in Moscow when I climbed six odoriferous flights of stairs—the stairwell emanating cabbage, reeking of cat urine—past raised voices battling for territory in communal apartments that housed twelve families sharing one noisome kitchen and one unspeakable bathroom, to the roof of the down-at-the-heels architectural confection Le Corbusier once called "the most beautiful building in Moscow." To reach the studio Kabakov had designed for himself up there, it was necessary to teeter on rickety boards laid over bare joists, past brick supporting columns, in the dim light of a dirty bulb that was a relief from the total darkness of the stairs, where the lights didn't work at all. Almost every element of that climb has found its way into what he calls his "Total Installations."

But when it comes to addressing the question of what it means to him to be included in the Whitney Biennial, Kabakov wants to be so precise that German won't do, and so Emilia translates. This translating business makes me nervous. It is a game between them that Emilia sometimes edits what he says, or ignores it. But this time she says, precisely, that there are two things he is completely serious about, "no irony": his mother and this question of identity.



In installations and albums, he has told the story of his mother's nightmare life in the Ukraine of the czars and Stalin's Soviet Union; her deprivations are at the heart of his art and the context in which to understand it. And on the matter of identity, although now he would have it that even in Moscow he was a citizen only of the art world, until very recently he had assigned himself the role of Soviet Everyman on extended loan to the West, bringing news of the lies, absurdities, dreary details, and self-deceptions of daily life in what was fast becoming a lost civilization.

But increasingly, the Soviet part has dropped away. We're the subject now, earthbound, caught in buffoonish bureaucratic nightmares, in quest of the fuel with which to jet-propel the spirit—or, to use a Kabakov word, the soul—out of there.

“I think he is on the level of Rauschenberg and Johns,” says the Whitney Museum's David Ross.

Kabakov still carries his red, out-of-date Soviet passport, together with his constantly renewed permit to re-enter the U.S. Emilia has them along at lunch, because she has been arranging visas for the journey they will undertake the day after the Biennial opens, to prepare or negotiate shows in Montevideo; Buenos Aires; Tokyo; Zurich; Paris; Helsinki; Tel Aviv; Munster, Germany; and Ljubljana, Slovenia. There's nothing unusual about this whirlwind schedule for the Kabakovs—in fact, a great many of Ilya's projects are conceived and drawn in some hotel room somewhere. Painting he reserves for New York. His loft is stripped down to the only thing that really matters in his life: work. Basically, the furniture consists of bed, TV, drafting table, easel, and the bland, blond Scandinavian-modern dining set for dinners and talk with denizens of the art world and friends from the old Soviet days—the artist Oleg Vassiliev, the philosopher Boris Groys (who is to him what Derrida is to a great many New York artists), the composer Vladimir Tarasov.

And so he's only sometimes visible in New York's art community. As for the Whitney, he says with no trace of his trademark twinkle, it's “one of the important events in the art world. The important thing is that I am accepted at this high level.”

THERE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN FOREIGN-BORN ARTISTS IN THE WHITNEY Biennial, although dealers like Barbara Toll remember a time when they were told—perhaps as an excuse, she admits—that an artist couldn't be included because he or she wasn't American. But ever since he arrived at the Whitney seven years ago, Ross has been looking for ways to fudge the “American Art” part of the museum's mission so that it reflects the globalization of the art world as much as American art itself does. When he assigned curator Lisa Phillips (“the consummate insider,” he calls her) to organize this year's Biennial, she invited the first outside curator in the Biennial's history to help her. Louise Neri was born in Australia, travels on a British passport, and is the New York editor of the Swiss art magazine *Parkett*.

“I wanted to have a discussion with someone who has a different perspective on American art,” says Phillips. “I was married to the artist Meyer Vaisman for a while, and he's Venezuelan, so I became very sensitive to the issue of national identity. I think one of the big recognitions of the nineties is the diverse cultures in America that might once have been marginalized.”

Fourteen of the 70 artists Phillips and Neri recruited for the show were born elsewhere—such as the Italian Francesco Clemente, who lives part-time in India but whose children go to school in New York, and who, amazingly, has never had a New York museum show; the Pakistani artist Shashwati Talukdar, now living in Philadelphia; and French-born New Yorker Louise Bourgeois, who may be 85 but, like Kabakov, is altogether capable of stealing the show. The insider and outsider Biennial curators took as their theme “inside/outside,” with the double meaning that these artists who are both inside and outside the culture create private worlds that are also accessible.

And that is precisely what Kabakov does.

“Ilya is a natural storyteller, and the stories he tells are stories of private lives lived in institutional worlds, and we have plenty of those,” says MOMA's Storr.

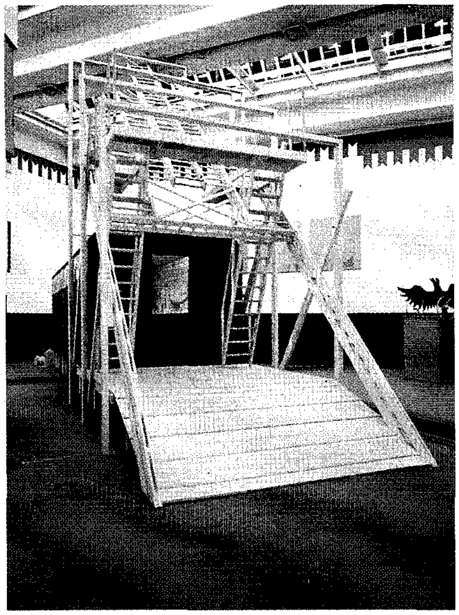
Like so many of Kabakov's other installations, “Treatment With Memories” at the Whitney begins at a narrow, battered door calculated to raise the anxiety level of those who dare to enter what might just as well turn out to be a broom closet as an artwork in a museum. Inside, on either side of a murky corridor painted Moscow brown and gray, are six curtained rooms, each containing a hospital bed, chairs, and a screen. We sit on a chair, just behind the opened curtain, so that we are seeing the screen from the point of view of someone lying on the bed. On that screen, in two of the rooms, projected slides from Kabakov's past will be accompanied by his voice remembering in Russian (“. . . During the war, things collected in America arrived to help Soviet children. . . . I got this camel-hair sweater; there was no way I would give it up . . ."). Earphones facilitate an English translation. Kabakov calibrates voice and setting—particularly those dirty bare lightbulbs—with obsessive exactitude in order to arouse a state of reverie through which we, too, can remember.

"Ilya's work is extremely provocative, and it's quite surgical," says Alanna Heiss, founding director of P.S. 1 Museum, the outpost of the international avant-garde in Queens. "He cuts very deep, and it can be very painful, and I think it takes a very long time to recover from his shows."

In four of the hospital rooms at the Whitney, the voice is Emilia's, the photographs are of her life, and her memories include the boy Kabakov—Tolya, as she calls him ("He would draw all kinds of animals and dolls for the kids . . .").

Emilia Kanevsky Kabakov is a distant cousin on his father's side, and she's been in love with him since she was 14. By the time they got together in New York, not many months after Tolya arrived, she'd been living in America for fifteen years and they'd both been married twice—he has a grown daughter; she has two. They're of a height and always together, always smiling, bundling against a world they assume to be hostile until they find out otherwise.

Emilia is a survivor in the Soviet manner. So, for that matter, is Kabakov. They learned to play the system in different ways. Emilia honed her skills hustling for barter in a dysfunctional system in which she was studying to play concert piano. Once in America, she did what it took: She bought and sold gas stations; she bought and sold art. Now, for Kabakov and his art, she figures the angles, drives the hard bargain, and makes sure the installations get made, in a flurry of faxes—handwritten, since she never learned to type.



THE "SOVIET EVERYMAN" IN GERMANY: KABAKOV'S INSTALLATION *THE RED WAGON* IN DÜSSELDORF.

"I think it takes a very long time to recover from his shows," says P.S. 1 Museum's Alanna Heiss.

Kabakov survived by manipulating the bureaucracy and keeping his head down. After World War II, abruptly and not for the first time, his father left his mother. She was without the papers that would permit her to reside in Moscow, where Ilya had been invited to enter art school. He lived in a dormitory and learned not only to run with a pack of feral adolescents but, without seeming to, often to lead them into pranks he calls "hooliganism." And then his mother would walk, ride the new subway, walk again to bring him soup, and he, torn between two worlds, would not eat it in front of the other boys. This continued when he was an adult. Under the protective cover of humor and geniality, he made himself a substantial career within the Union of Soviet Artists by illustrating children's books and scientific texts as far from political content as possible. He learned what it took to get assignments from the government's publishing companies, since there were no others. And what it took was mediocrity. Faces, balls, stools, elephants had to look like every other face, ball, stool, elephant that every other illustrator had drawn.

But in the early sixties, in his studio, Kabakov was making art for himself, art that used his hard-learned banal drawing style and the language of bureaucracy to describe a world in which nothing was what the system said it was. The drawings became a series, the series became albums—each with a different character, a different system at its core. In Moscow, he gathered together drawings and texts in well over a hundred albums. "Ten Characters," the first ten albums, would eventually become the installation whose elements crowded Kabakov's rooftop studio when I met him in 1987 because there was no place to display it.

Kabakov habitually works himself into a frenzy in the final days of adjusting every light, every scrap of paper, for an installation. But that's nothing compared with his state that autumn of 1987. He was about to make his first trip to the West—to Graz, for an exhibition. On a break in Vienna during that trip, he stopped in at the American Embassy, bearing a letter from the dealer Ronald Feldman that invited him to exhibit in New York. He tells this story with high drama: handing his passport to the guard, being ordered to wait, finally hearing the call:

"Kabakov!"

The consul who interviewed him knew Ronald Feldman. He got the passport back with a stamp in it: an American visa. The only thing left to do, as a Soviet citizen with a passport stamped by the evil empire, was to report to the KGB. But it was too late for them to stop him; it was a *fait accompli.*

At the moment, Kabakov and Feldman are engaged in the aftermath of an ugly divorce. Feldman is taking both of the Kabakovs to court; each side accuses the other of bad faith.

"This is not about Ilya Kabakov as an artist; he is a great artist. It's about commercial issues" is all Feldman will say.

"It's about betrayal of trust," says Emilia. "The case is in the court, and we will see."

Back at the Whitney, the fourth floor is a cacophony of circular saws, electric screwdrivers; walls are being erected, drywall spackled. An intruding elevator shaft has made it necessary to alter the dimensions of one of Kabakov's hospital rooms. He gets out a folding ruler. He measures. He finds a room the museum has designated for storage. Use that, he decides. But a door will have to be reframed; budgets are tight. Lana Hum, the museum's manager of exhibition design and construction, balks. Kabakov is genial, he is polite, but he insists.

The Kabakovs are in the lobby getting their coats on when Hum rushes down. "I took care of it," she says, panting. "No problem."

"No problem," Kabakov says. He kisses her on the cheek.

"Understand," she explains. "This is my first Biennial."

Amei Wallach is the author of Ilya Kabakov: The Man Who Never Threw Anything Away *(Harry N. Abrams, 1996).*

Photograph courtesy of the Barbara Gladstone Gallery.

Art for Argument's Sake

A full and frank exchange of views about the Whitney Biennial. By Edith Newhall

THE WHITNEY BIENNIAL is upon us again, serving up what it considers the most compelling art of the moment—and what Hilton Kramer will undoubtedly consider an excrescence. For emerging artists who have met the curators' criteria, it's a ticket to potential art-world stardom, summoning offers from dealers and jealousy from colleagues, while the show's inclusion of mid-career and older artists sends a signal that freshness is not just the province of the young—and neither is idiosyncrasy. In past years, the Biennial's perceived politics have just about overshadowed the works themselves. Though the culture wars seem to have abated, this year's exhibition, opening March 20 and organized by Whitney curator Lisa Phillips and *Parkett* U.S. editor Louise Neri, can't help but fuel the usual circus of controversy. For instance, it includes far more artists who work here but do not have U.S. citizenship (a former no-no) than ever before, and a suspiciously hefty contingent of Los Angeles–based artists.

In the spirit of merry ferment the Whitney seems to enjoy stirring up every other year, we invited our own diverse group of art-world denizens to free-associate on their most hotly debated ritual. Below are their remarks.

MARCIA TUCKER, director of the New Museum of Contemporary Art and former curator of painting and sculpture at the Whitney from 1969 to 1977: "There are so few venues for work that is being made now that an opportunity to see it and evaluate it is very valuable. I think one of the reasons that the Biennial appears to be so problematic is that it's set up as a kind of tastemaker. Because it has no focus other than to represent what's happening in contemporary art and because the field is far too big for the show to be truly representative, it ends up being seen as a kind of popularity contest for contemporary art: what's in, what's out. I don't think this is how this exhibition was intended, and I don't think that's how serious viewers see it."

CHARLIE FINCH, New York editor, *Coagula Art Journal:* "It's always too much promised, too little delivered. The reason is that politics enter into it. By the time the curators have taken care of their favors to their friends, you've got a hodgepodge. I'm okay with Lisa [Phillips] and Louise [Neri]. Having been up there at the Whitney watching the construction, I think they've got a hit on their hands. At *Coagula,* we've been pushing young L.A. artists for five years, and they've definitely followed our lead on that."

HILTON KRAMER, editor of the *New Criterion* and art critic of the New York *Observer:* "My suggestion is that they declare a moratorium for at least a decade and see if it makes the slightest difference to the life of art in New York."

LAUREN WITTELS, owner, Lauren Wittels Gallery: "I think of disappointment. Every time it comes around, everyone hopes it will do what they want it to, and every time it doesn't. I always want it to be a survey of the younger artists who have kicked off a spark among other young artists—artists who have generated talk when you go out for drinks, people whose art you discuss, not people whose art has sold out. It's usually pretty dry."

JOSEPH HELMAN, owner, Joseph Helman Gallery. "I look forward to the Biennial, and I always enjoy it. However, I do believe it's inherited from another era, when there was an art scene that was much more cohesive. If I were to redo the Whitney Biennial, I would make a commitment to a program that would leave a gallery space flexible so that exhibitions could be done on short notice, and that way, if an artist or a group of artists did something really provocative, they'd have a place to show it while it's still fresh. Then every six or eight or ten years they could show the best from those exhibitions, and that would be their major salon event. That way, they would have a continuing salon as well as a historic one. But I think the Whitney's commitment to provide a salon for the greatest art community since Florence is marvelous."

PETER PLAGENS, art critic, *Newsweek:* "You get a crash course in what's going on. I get a cold frisson of dread because I'm going to have to look at a lot of unpleasant images and I'm going to get scolded and have my nose rubbed in something. And I try to put that aside when I go through the door. It's not that it's art I won't understand, but I know I'm going to see something like a photograph of Catherine Opie's body piercings."

ANTHONY HADEN-GUEST, cultural reporter and author of *True Colors* (Atlantic Monthly Press) and *The Last Party* (William Morrow): "It gets routinely trounced, but I think it adds a little color and life to things. Not many cities have a museum that keeps a regular eye on what's going on in the studios today. I think if one looks at the past, even the most derided Biennials have been pretty interesting. Have there been major talents that have been left out? Of course. Have there been disposable talents who have been featured? Of course. Did so-and-so deserve a whole wall? I doubt it. But by and large, it's a plus."

CHUCK CLOSE, painter and veteran of several Biennials: "The first thing I think of is that it used to be the Annual. One year painting and the next year sculpture, and the whole museum would be given over to it and there would only be one work by each artist. The Annual presented so many more artists—I don't think the

Photographs: clockwise from top left, Phyllis Herfield; Tom Warren; Sebastiano Piras; Dean McNeil.

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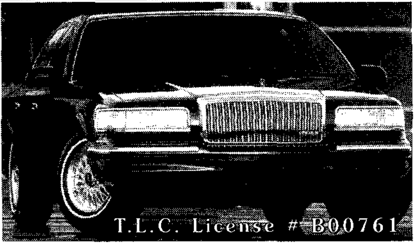

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Biennial shows adequately, as much as it used to, what's going on in the art world. A really interesting artist can get passed over by one curator because he or she doesn't fit the agenda, and then two years later because he or she doesn't fit the agenda of another curator. It's become more about the curators than about the artists. But I will say this—as criticized as they are, they're the only museum that even tries. The others have abdicated all responsibility in terms of trying to present any kind of serious overview of where the art world is at that particular moment."

ANGELA WESTWATER, co-owner, Sperone Westwater: "I bring the same expectations to the Whitney Biennial as I do to the Oscars. You look forward to it because it's always revealing of what the "Academy" perceives it should acknowledge. Oftentimes, it seems that the fashions get more attention than the talents honored. And in the end, after I've stayed up until one in the morning, I always regret having done so."

DAVID BOURDON, art writer and author of *Designing the Earth* (Abrams) and *Warhol* (Abrams): "I don't think there's any way to organize it without the mediocrity creeping in. The mediocrity is a built-in component. It has to do with the demographics of the show—by the time you pick the right number of everything, you end up with a repellent goulash. I think it's just impossible to organize a Whitney Biennial that will look attractive, be meaningful to people in the art world, and be memorable. No matter how much controversy they generate, the fact is, no one remembers who was in them, including artists who were in them. It's amazing, when you look at the old Biennial catalogues, how totally banal the shows were. The Biennial is not about quality, to use that overworked word."

LINDA KIRKLAND, owner, Linda Kirkland Gallery: "The Whitney Biennial makes me think about the opportunity for younger artists who haven't yet gotten critical acclaim. I wish the Biennial curators would do even more homework and that there would be more emerging artists. The emerging artists are producing the art that is dealing with contemporary issues, and often it takes a while for that work to get exposure."

RIRKRIT TIRAVANIJA, artist who was in 1995 Biennial: "It's here again already?"

BETSY BAKER, editor-in-chief, *Art in America:* "When I hear the words *Whitney Biennial,* I wish it was still the Whitney Annual. I think when it went to a biennial format it lost the insane freshness and chaotic immediacy that the Annual had. They start preparing the Biennial very early, and a lot of things change by the time they get it done. One of the problems with the Biennial is that a lot of the work has been seen in the galleries by the time the show has been mounted. You can't, in all fairness, ask an artist to hold back their work for two years, but you can if it's one year. If it's two, it's going to crop up everywhere."

RICHARD ARMSTRONG, director of Carnegie Museum of Art and former Whitney curator who worked on several Biennials : "It's a tsunami of novelty. It's like a glimpse in the rearview mirror—the objects are closer than they appear."

GUERRILLA GIRL: "The Whitney Biennial makes me think of the commercialism it's based on—the gallery system—and that it doesn't work for women and minority artists who are shut out of that system."

DEAN VALENTINE, president of Walt Disney Television and contemporary-art collector who owns works by several artists in the 1997 Biennial: "In my view, it's a wonderful institution. It plays an important role for artists and the art public and for New York City. At the end of the day, the Biennial is often a flawed view of what's happening in contemporary art, but it seems like the curators of this Biennial have made some courageous choices. Of the California artists in this year's Biennial, I think these are artists that artists themselves would have picked."

JEFFREY DEITCH, Deitch Projects: "We have a very diverse art community in New York, and to have an institution like the Biennial that focuses our discussion and attention is very important. Now the New York art world is so big there are a number of sub–art worlds—the figurative group, the political group, the abstract

Photographs: top left, Brigitte Lacombe; top right, Stan Franzos.

painters, just to name a few—and they function as self-contained units. Each has its own critics, dealers, and collectors as well as its artists, and the Whitney Biennial is something that brings all of this together. I also very much endorse that the Biennial's not a young artists' show, that it represents what is fresh, whether the artist is 20 or 80 years old."

PETER HALLEY, abstract painter, publisher of *index magazine,* and veteran of 1987 and 1991 Biennials: "Cultural institutions in New York are not that supportive of young artists. In Europe, you have *Kunsthalles* and other small museums that are constantly showing the work of new artists. The Biennial is one of the few places where that happens in New York. I think every community needs events to get excited about and for many of us in the art world, the Biennial is a celebration that causes conversation."

DAVID SHERMAN, filmmaker who lives in San Francisco and is in the 1997 Biennial: "It's one of the few museum exhibitions in which filmmakers are recognized among artists of other disciplines. And it's exciting for a young filmmaker to be included in the same show with established artists like Chris Burden and Francesco Clemente. I don't know what effect being included in the Whitney Biennial will have on my career. Maybe a two-year teaching stint that will help fund my next film."

FRANK MOORE, painter who was included in the 1995 Biennial: "I think of it as a sprawling free-for-all where there is no possibility of a coherent point of view—there's too much work to focus on any single point of view, and I think that is part of its charm. It's a bazaar, a souk."

KERRI SCHARLIN, artist who has not been in a Biennial: "I just want to know why you're asking me. What was it about my work that interested you? How do you think my work would have looked in the Biennial? How have my comments compared to those of the others you've called? Who will be photographing the piece? Is there a chance I'll make the cover?"

JOHN COPLANS, photographer and veteran of two Biennials: "I'm afraid I don't really think about it." ■

Photographs: top, L. Ruyter; bottom, Kenneth Willardt.

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MIREZI MAY BE A PAN-ASIAN HOT spot, but the owners have yet to let it get to their head. Not only is their prix fixe lunch two bucks less than the ubiquitous $19.95 meal served around town, but it's even cheaper for the underpaid educators (and their students) who work in the area. Its three courses includes a starter (like eggplant maki or Manila clams with Chinese sausage) followed by an entrée (try the stir-fried yam noodles with toasted sesame seeds or a tea-smoked-duck-confit salad with grilled portobello mushrooms and black rice) and dessert. The price is $17.95, but it's $15 for teachers and students from such neighboring institutions as Parsons, NYU, the New School, and Yeshiva. *Mirezi, 59 Fifth Ave., near 13th St. (242-9709); A.E., M.C., and V.; Mon.–Fri. noon–3.*

Under Exposed

THE HIDEOUS EXPERIENCE OF BRA-SHOPping—the clammy, frustrated feeling you get while wrestling into one bra after another beneath unflattering fluorescent lights—can be circumvented. Ripplu, a lingerie shop filled with wispy little things from La Perla, Lou, Only Hearts, and others, specializes in custom fitting (for those of us who can never figure out what bra size we really are). For the month of March, the store is discounting selected pieces up to 50 percent. For example, La Perla bra, was $129, now $64.50; Lou underpants, were $62, now $49.60. *Ripplu, 575 Fifth Ave., near 47th St., second floor (599-2223); A.E., M.C., and V.; Mon.–Sat. 10–7, Sun. noon–5; 3/17–3/31.*

The Java Hut

EVERY NOW AND THEN, THE BROOKLYN coffee roaster D'Amico Foods cooks up specials on its mail-order coffees. This time around, three pounds of light roasts, including the house blend, Costa Rican, and Mocha Java, was $19.57, now $16.77; three pounds of dark roasts, including Colombian Supremo, French, and Viennese, was $18.53, now $15.90; three pounds of decaffeinated coffee, including Colombian Light, Mocha Java, and Kenya AA, was $25.67, now $21.90. Shipping is $3.40. *D'Amico Foods, 309 Court St. (718-875-5403); A.E., M.C., V., and checks; Mon.–Sat. 8–7; 3/17–4/30.*

Trim Line

FILLES ET GARÇONS, THE burgeoning chain of hair salons, touts itself as both *Parisian* and *quick*—a paradox, perhaps, but one that works. The salon is opening its third location and fêting the event with the following discounts: haircut, was $31, now $26; color, was $55, now $44; highlights, were $70, now $56. *Filles et Garçons, 50 W. 55th St. (586-6585); M.C. and V.; Mon. 11–8, Tues.–Fri. 9–8, Sat. 10–6; 3/17–6/30.*

Must Have **Fashion stylist Phyllis Leibowitz uses her savvy eye to gather home furnishings from India that she, in turn, sells to the toniest shops in town. Her warehouse sale has vintage accessories and furniture priced as follows: wool shawl, retail $550, here $350; sequined pillow cover, retail $65, here $45.** ***Phyllis Leibowitz, by appointment (627-1436); 3/17–4/28.***

Photograph by Tom LeGoff.

S&B'S N.B. Because 1993 was the year that two elephants were born into the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey family, any child born that year or after can get free tickets to the circus. Parents who send in their child's name and date of birth will receive a ticket coupon that's valid anytime, for any show in any state. Allow six weeks for processing. *Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey, P.O. Box 39845, Edina, Minnesota 55439-9458. On AOL, keyword: ringling. Call 703-448-4000 for additional info.*

Pot Pourri

THE SEVENTH ANNUAL SALE AT TRIBECA Potters—an airy studio shared by ten potters—has a spread of fetching ceramicware on sale: platters, were $80, now $30; teapots, were $150, now $25; pitchers, were $30, now $10. Seconds (slightly imperfect or discontinued items) include mugs, $5; small plates, $3; dinner plates, $8; and covered casseroles, $15. *TriBeCa Potters, 443 Greenwich St., second floor (431-7631); A.E., M.C., and V.; daily 11–6; 3/21–4/6.*

Natural Resources

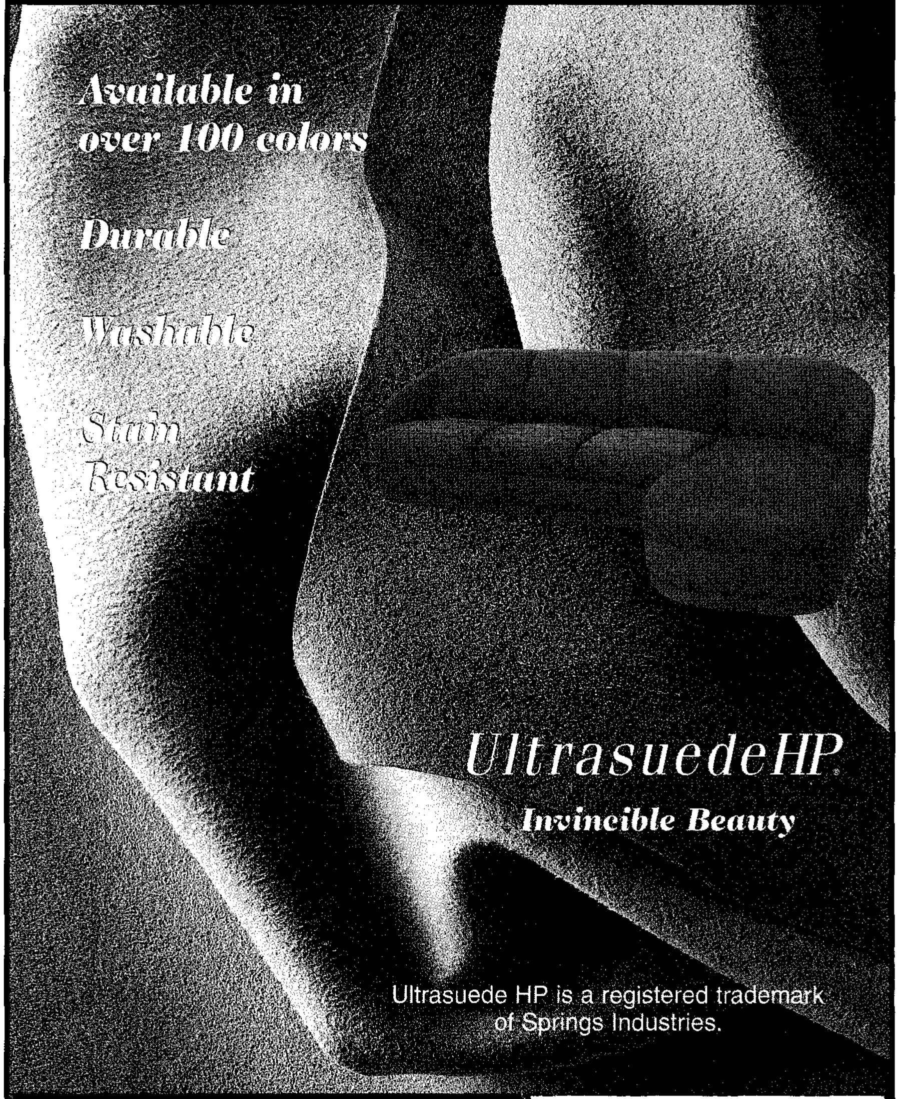
MOTHERS & OTHERS, A NATIONAL NONPROFIT organization, puts an environmentally correct twist on sticker collecting with the Labels to Learning program. Here's how it works: Children under 12 can collect organic-food labels and send them, along with a self-addressed stamped envelope, to Mothers & Others in exchange for vouchers that grant free admission to the Bronx Zoo, the New York Botanical Gardens, Liberty Science Center, the Children's Museum of Manhattan, and the New York Aquarium for Wildlife Conservation. *For information, call Mothers & Others at 888-ECO-INFO or 242-0010.*

The Dressing Room

RENÉE DUMARR MAKES WOMEN'S SUITS that are conservative with a dash of something the designer terms "city sleek." Her sample sale has spring and summer suits discounted as follows: car coat and dress suit, were $370, now $185; three-piece pantsuit, was $425, now $210. *Renée DuMarr, 530 Seventh Ave., near 39th St., seventh floor (768-3734); A.E.; Thurs.–Fri. 5–8, Sat. 10–3; 3/20–3/22.*

DO NOT PHONE: Send suggestions to Dany Levy, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, six weeks before the sale. Only sales exclusive to "Sales & Bargains" and not previously advertised or published elsewhere will be considered.

Foremost Colors



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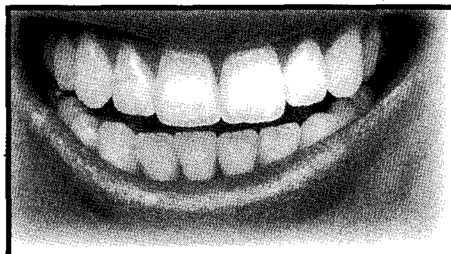

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BEST BIDS **MITCHELL OWENS**

A Thing for Ming

The Chinese were minimalists centuries before the modernists. An Asian-furniture revival shows that Ming craftsmen were better at it, too.

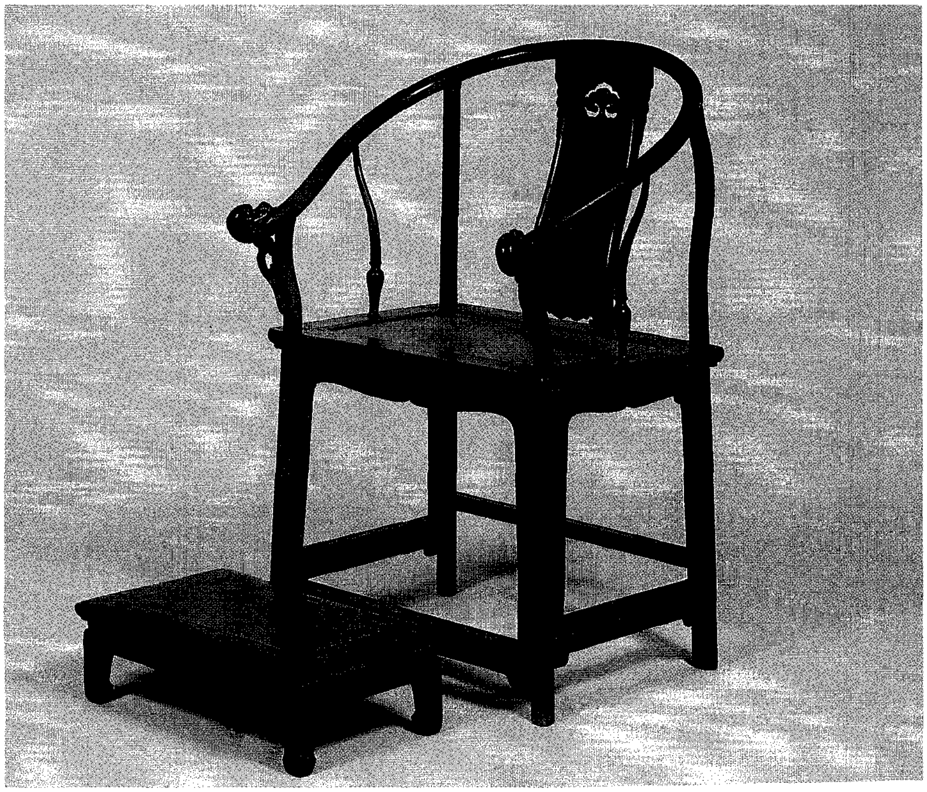
A HORDE OF CHINESE FURNISHINGS IS ABOUT TO GO on the block, and Deng Xiaoping dies. Impeccable timing for the two biggest auction houses, whose week of China sales—March 17, 18, and 19 at Sotheby's, March 20 and 21 at Christie's—has been loudly hyped and highly anticipated since last September, when Christie's unloaded the contents of the Museum of Classical Chinese Furniture in Renaissance, California. The museum, now defunct, had been a project of the Fellowship of Friends, an obscure spiritual community founded in the seventies. Suddenly taken with eighteenth-century French decorative arts, the Fellowship decided to divest itself of its Ming screens and yoke-backed chairs. Experts chatted it up as the most important collection of Chinese works of art to appear at auction in this century. One hundred and seven lots of Ming- and Qing-dynasty furniture and *objets* were up for grabs; the Sun Tzu–spouting mogul Michael Ovitz sat in the audience. The fact that the Metropolitan Museum was simultaneously drawing record crowds with its "Splendors of Imperial China" exhibition only stoked the mania.

At the end of the two-day event, Christie's chalked up $11.2 million, as some gavel prices rose to more than ten times the presale estimates. The sale also set a record for a piece of Chinese furniture sold at auction: A trustee of the Minneapolis Museum of Art shelled out $1,102,000 for a seven-foot-tall seventeenth-century screen, a majestic confection of carved, pierced, and fretworked wood; in the center was a slab of marble whose exaggerated veining depicted a mountain range. (Ovitz dragged home a pair of circa-1700 display cabinets and five seventeenth-century horseshoe-back armchairs. His tab? $838,000.)

Central and Southeast Asian artifacts are the design world's shiny new toys. Decorators like Chessy Rayner and Mica Ertegun decree Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos essential stops on the nineties Grand Tour. Retrospectives are launched of T. H. Robsjohn-Gibbings and Edward Wormley, who attempted to revolutionize forties and fifties living-room sets with a touch of Ming.

Still, Chinese furniture has a lot to overcome. In the twenties, travelers returned from Peking with cheap souvenirs, unwittingly triggering a craze for chop-suey-parlor interiors, garish fringed lampshades, and Anna May Wong movies. Things Ming tended to stay put.

Mies van der Rohe, Jean-Michel Frank, and the rest of the early modernist designers congratulated themselves on creating minimalist chic, but—now it can be told—the Chinese got there first. They also did it better. Although Ming chairs have a reputation for being penitential in terms of comfort, they often incorporate forgiving S- or C-shape back splats. "Ergonomics, long before the West ever thought about it," says Marcus Flacks of MD Flacks, a New York City gallery exhibiting at the second annual International Asian Art Fair in the Seventh Regiment Armory (March 22 through March 26). In contrast to the steel-pipe rigidity of modernism today, sophisticated mortise-and-tenon joinery and hinging enabled Chinese furniture, much of it lightweight, to be folded flat or disassembled in minutes. Try doing that with a Barcelona chair. The shapes of classical Chinese furniture were basically invented in the tenth century and, barring subtle refinements and flirtations with baroque carving, have not changed much. Chairs are skeletal and uncushioned, and tables have calligraphic silhouettes. (Surface ornamentation—inlay, paint, and gilding—is rare.) Among the prizes in Christie's Jingguantang sale on March 20 is a waist-high huanghuali console with four slender legs (estimated to



Spare parts: A seventeenth-century Ming chair (est. $80,000) and footrest (est. $6,000) at Christie's.

Photograph courtesy of Christie's New York.

fetch $80,000 to $100,000).

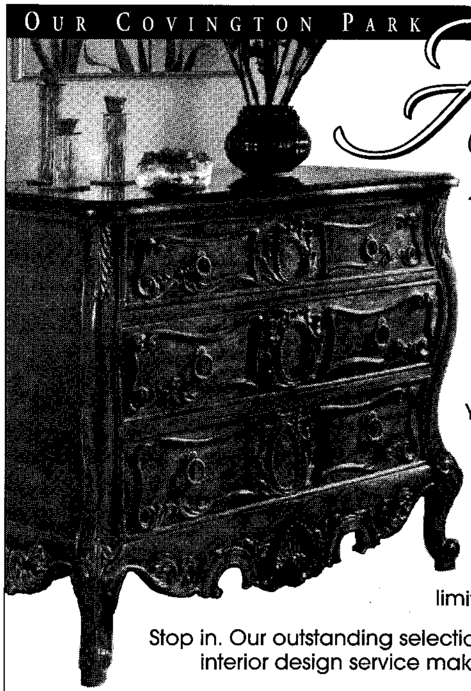
"Prices are growing, growing, and growing. Ten years from now, people will be saying, 'God, that stuff from Renaissance was just given away,' " says Robert Ellsworth, whose 1970 book, *Chinese Furniture* (Harper & Row), remains a standard, if out-of-print, reference work. A flinty patrician whose Fifth Avenue apartment contains what he immodestly calls "the best collection of classical Chinese furniture in private hands," Ellsworth is also among the 60 exhibitors at the International Asian Art Fair. A procession of equally established mandarins is participating in this year's Sinophilic show-and-tell: Grace Wu Bruce of Hong Kong, an Isabelle Adjani look-alike and the author of *Chinese Classical Furniture* (Oxford University Press, 1995); Ariane Dandois of Paris; Nicholas Grindley of London (Ovitz's adviser); Gisèle Croës of Brussels; and New York's Debby and Marcus Flacks.

China is suddenly selling. New advertisements for ABC Carpet & Home herald a shipment of antique Chinese furniture. Jamson White, a new shop in SoHo, has reconfigured antique six-poster beds into cozy, cagelike sofas and daybeds. William Lipton, the owner of an eponymous Asiatica shop on East 61st Street, recently hosted a sold-out exhibition of antique bamboo furniture, even as his former business partner, Robert Homma (see page 54), was unveiling Dimson Homma, an Asian-themed emporium on East 67th Street.

Ben Bambrough opened Cochin Asian Imports in a West Broadway loft last October, but he's already burned out on Indonesia. "Everyone's so sick of Indonesian furniture," Bambrough says. "I know people who never want to see another distressed painted cabinet."

Classical Chinese furniture may elicit the same backlash in a year or two, but for the moment, the design-obsessed can kowtow to new idols: exotic-sounding timbers like zitan, tielimu luohan, jichimu, and the fabled huanghuali.

Huanghuali is a variety of rosewood (several varieties, actually)—"Linnaeus wouldn't recognize it as a category," says Ellsworth. The name refers mainly to the *hardness and density of the wood grain.* Softer, more vulnerable woods like elm and tielimu luohan were also commonly used, and they cost as much as 30 percent less. But what is saved in cost is not necessarily equaled in quality. Softwoods are easily ruined by humidity and insects. Not huanghuali. After the Communist takeover of China, some Ming antiques ended up in provincial markets, sold as chopping blocks. Still, for some (including purists like Robert Ellsworth), elm has its charms. "I personally would rather have a great piece of elm that's all real," says Ellsworth, "than a heavily restored piece of huanghuali, of which there is a *great deal.*" ■



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MOVIES DAVID DENBY

Members Only

In 'Private Parts,' drive-time shock jock Howard Stern goes soft and mushy, expecting kudos for staying faithful to his wife.

Radio craze: The real Howard Stern, with wife Alison (played by Mary McCormack), in *Private Parts.*

WHAT TO MAKE OF HOWARD STERN? IT WAS obviously a stroke of Jewish genius to turn a small member into a major asset. Howard Stern has killed off some genuine taboos and eliminated certain chagrins in the only way possible in the media—by turning them into boasts. As a source of comic shtick, he's gotten more mileage out of his ding-a-ling than Jack Benny did out of stinginess. So Howard Stern can't simply be shrugged off. But he shouldn't be lionized either. With his shoulder-length hair and pointed chin, Stern looks like a naked *philosophe,* a sort of crumbum Voltaire. In the movie **Private Parts,** made from his 1993 mock autobiography (same title), Stern chronicles his Horatio Howard ascent from suburban Nowheresville. The movie has countless scenes of Stern demonstrating to us how much he loves his wife and parents and how good he is to his employees while he's rotten to everyone in authority. All of which may be true, but it's embarrassing to see such flagrant self-testimonials on the screen. Before Stern's megalomania takes over, the movie has a likably slapdash quality. But when it goes bad, it goes really bad.

With the help of the writers Len Blum and Michael Kalesniko and director Betty Thomas, Stern has created an effective screen character for himself as a boy and young man—Howard the oversized, underdeveloped Long Island nerdo thinking dirty thoughts. He wants only to please people and fit in, but outrageous impulses always break free. The filmmakers steal whatever they can from *Annie Hall,* but they steal well and gracefully. Stern narrates his life, and the scenes of his childhood are fast, light, and funny in Woody Allen's vignette style. Sitting on a locker-room bench, the teenage Howard stares in misery as a variety of naked black boys go past him, heading for the showers. In the movie (but not always on the air), Stern gets away with masochistic jokes by not dwelling on them—one quick moment and then on to the next riff. There are also mild little Allen-type alienating devices: Stern, apologizing to the audience, plays himself as a college student at Boston University, an absurdly tall gawky geek in a mustache and black mop of hair. Standing in for himself at 20, Stern has a surprisingly young and tender face, as if memory of old failures had softened his features.

His early career in radio is done swiftly as a series of professional disasters and moral victories. At some awful Westchester station, he tries to play it straight, using a mellifluous, hello-you-nice-people voice on a morning

Photograph by K. C. Bailey/Paramount Pictures.

show, but he can't go through with it. At a midwestern station, doing the news, he cuts for a "remote" to some trouble spot and imitates a female black agitator: "Kill, kill de white man." Howard Stern, at his best, is a casual satirist of hypocrisy and identity politics; he's a throwback to the heroic age of radio, when a few spontaneous madcaps broke up the long patches of mediocrity and pleasant boredom. Though he presents his upward surge from obscurity to celebrity as a titanic struggle, he didn't actually struggle for very long: He was a big star by the time he was 30 or 31. His achievement was to turn urban nihilism, white hetero division, into commercial sport. Howard Stern isn't just successful in the marketplace; he *is* the marketplace. Derision and crass race- and woman-baiting are now the essence of salesmanship. And salesmanship that works has become irresistible for almost everyone. As if commercial success made Stern hip, the *Times* and *The New Yorker* have eagerly jumped on the bandwagon while casually dumping everything they believe in. It's a measure of Stern's power that he can get people to misrepresent themselves so obviously.

Private Parts becomes painful once Stern makes it big. We are treated as if we were all worshiping fans, fascinated by the assembling of Howard's immortal team (Robin Quivers, Fred Norris, Jackie Martling), and we're supposed to cheer for the team's humiliating anyone who tries to stop them or restrict them in any way. The persecution of a disapproving NBC executive, played by the diminutive Paul Giamatti, amounts to outright sadism—even after Stern has triumphed, the guy is pulled back for another kick in the rear. And how funny is the team? Sometimes very funny. But don't make the mistake of listening to the show too often. Howard Stern has a fifties idea of sexual humor: Get a big blonde to take off her clothes. His jeering at ethnics and women has the dull ritual gamesmanship of a guy at a bar going for easy laughs.

It's fine with me if celebrities who put on airs get cut up. Howard Stern destroys the phonier kinds of high-mindedness, but he also destroys *any* kind of high-mindedness. And the movie, in imitation of Stern, plays the same stupid trick on the audience that *The People vs. Larry Flynt* tried to play: It implies that anyone disapproving of its hero is either a religious fundamentalist or a stuffed shirt. The trick is pulled off by dumping so many turds on the enemy that he's reduced to angry spluttering or pained dignity.

How can you argue with a man who puts himself down so openly? You can't. But Howard Stern's member is a double-edged sword. With every swing, he destroys taboos—and says that dignity is an illusion. Whatever Milos Forman may think, the real Larry Flynt liberated not some healthy carnality in the working man but white-guy resentment and rage. Men who feel out of it identify with the losers who become big media winners and get to tell off women and immigrants. In a shameless society, no one has any way of knowing when he's been patronized.

The trouble with small-dick boasting, as opposed to the usual kind of boasting, is that it's unappeasable. The glare of Howard Stern's self-promotion is blinding. In the second half of the movie, as Stern becomes a celeb, he tells us again and again that he can have any woman in town but that he will remain faithful to his wife (Mary McCormack). He makes himself into a martyr of denial. Power, apparently, is what really turns him on. At some level, he fancies himself a leader. But of what? The movie shows crowds gathering together to celebrate his ratings triumph over Don Imus. Whoopee. He raises his arms as the masses salute. Then it's back to spanking lesbians. Howard Stern, despite his victories, is a jerk's idea of a free man. ▬

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THEATER JOHN SIMON

Flea-Bitten

Naomi Wallace's 'One Flea Spare' is boring, pretentious, and pointless; Vanessa Redgrave's 'Antony and Cleopatra' is pointless, pretentious, and boring.

NAOMI WALLACE, THE AUTHOR OF **One Flea Spare,** is a very confused young woman. For one thing, she is still a Marxist well after the collapse of Marxism. For another, she has taken her title from a wonderful poem by John Donne, "The Flea," specifically from the line "Oh stay, three lives in one flea spare," meaning, "Spare a flea that has sucked your blood and mine and thus united us." But by itself, *one flea spare* could mean, at best, "one extra flea," which has no demonstrable bearing on the play. Finally, she has written a piece that is not only pretentious and boring but also empty, pointless, and totally preposterous.

The great London plague of 1665 makes for a lively background, and Miss Wallace has done some research. She has clearly read Defoe's *A Journal of the Plague Year,* the relevant parts of Samuel Pepys's diary, and some modern historians. But homework does not a stage work make. Her story concerns an affluent elderly couple, William and Darcy Snelgrave, whose servants have died of the plague and who are now stuck in their boarded-up home for a month of quarantine with two separate intruders (a likely story!): a 12-year-old girl, Morse, presumed to be the daughter of Sir Nevill and Lady Elizabeth Braithwaite, plague victims; and Bunce, a disaffected young merchant sailor, pressed into one navy after another and looking for a new life. On guard outside the house is Kabe, a rascally watchman.

The plot is as simplistic as it is simple. The authoritarian, patriarchal William has a prurient, closet-gay fascination with Bunce that takes on a sadistic form: Darcy, who after two years of marriage was badly burned all over, and so lost her husband's sexual favors forever, is rekindled by Bunce. He has a permanent wound in his side into which she sensually sticks her finger. Later, he sticks a finger into some other part of hers; still later, they copulate in front of the tied-up and blindfolded William.

The precocious and flirtatious Morse—the daughter of a Braithwaite servant—has fun with Bunce as with all others, and after William dies of something unspecified, and Darcy comes down with the plague, helps the old woman commit suicide. Kabe is the common man, manipulative and unscrupulous, just what he needs to be to survive the plague and that worse scourge the ruling class. He may, in his dallying with Morse, be a pedophile, but poor folk take their furtive pleasures where they can.

Morse, who represents the author's poetic, feminist, and Marxist sides, comes off best: She inherits the world. Bunce, the good proletarian, comes off second-best, achieving his emancipation at last. Darcy, though upper-class, is at least a woman, and so gets some sort of fulfillment in the end. For William, the rich male chauvinist, there is only humiliation and death from, as it were, political obsolescence. He embodies the Marxist message, for which Miss Wallace is hailed as a political playwright as well as a supremely poetic one. Kabe, the lord of misrule, illustrates the play's second epigraph, from Brecht: "Corruption is our only hope," a truly edifying motto.

But this sophomoric, sex-and-scatology-obsessed work needs psychoanalysis more than interpretation. As for the author's highly touted poetry, chiefly spouted by Morse and Darcy (note that both women have masculine names), here are some samples: "My head is full. Of ocean. And the shells are sliding back and forth in my ears." "I am filled. With angels." "The bird had a song like a long, long spoon and we could sip at it like jam." "I can smell your heart. . . . It's sweet. It's rotting in your chest." This stuff can go on for whole paragraphs. With wildly poetic punctuation: "A horse on fire. In full gallop. It was almost. Beautiful. It would have been. Beautiful. But for the smell."

Royal pain: Vanessa Redgrave and David Harewood in *Antony and Cleopatra.*

Photograph by Michal Daniel.

Miss Wallace's grammar is atrocious, full of things such as "phenomena" (singular) and "I skulked the city." Her characters keep saying "Sir Braithwaite" for "Sir Nevill" (some knowledge of England, that!). Ron Daniels's direction can do nothing to help, and even such able actors as Dianne Wiest and Jon De Vries come to grief. No one sounds properly British except little Mischa Barton, who plays Morse; she, however, cannot begin to act the part. And to think that *One Flea Spare* has won three prestigious awards! I don't know which is scarier—if the other candidates were better but lost out, or if this was really the best of the lot.

Violet CONCERNS A SCARRED AND HOMELY young woman who travels by Greyhound from North Carolina to Tulsa to see a TV evangelist who promises to make her beautiful. On the bus she meets two soldiers and they become friends. After a grand night on the town in Memphis, she shacks up with the crass white private, Monty, though she prefers the shy black sergeant, Flick. Both men fall for her, but she journeys on undeterred.

What need has a girl of miracle cures when two G.I.'s want to marry her? Will the preacher miraculously beautify her? Will she wed one of the soldiers? If so, which? The musical *Violet,* by Jeanine Tesori and Brian Crawley, is small, but sweet, potatoes, nicely staged by Susan H. Schulman and neatly performed by all, especially Michael McElroy as Flick. Derek McLane's spartan but versatile scenery works wonders. Less wonderful is the fact that Violet's scar, the crucial centerpiece of the play, is left to the viewer's imagination.

Antony and Cleopatra IS ONE OF SHAKESPEARE'S finest tragedies, and I have never understood why it isn't also one of his most popular. The production Vanessa Redgrave has directed and stars in goes a long way toward answering my question. Despite her political missteps, Miss Redgrave has usually been artistically sound. Here she discards every form of credibility: Things could have been scarcely worse had she cast as her leading man Yassir Arafat.

Roughly two thirds of her Romans and Alexandrians are black, Hispanic, or Chinese-American. This would matter less if they all spoke the same English. But David Harewood, an Antony who speaks and moves without grace, also looks like a nasty caricature of Dick Gregory. He has an African-Anglo accent and no poetry in his delivery despite a booming voice and an infectious grin. As Enobarbus, the American Alex Allen Morris cuts an even more comic figure, looking like a semi-inflated Eddie Murphy in *The Nutty Professor,* and sounding rather like Jack Benny's

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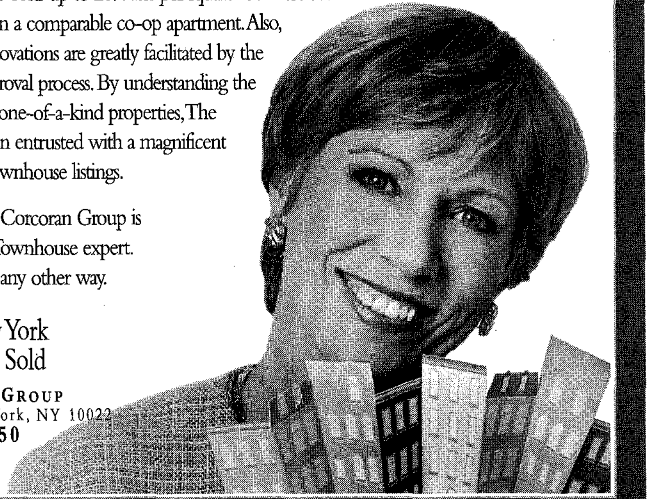

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Michael McElroy and Lauren Ward in *Violet*.

Rochester. He delivers the great poetic speech about Cleopatra's barge as if it were about the Staten Island ferry, in tones that would do a rapper proud.

For Octavius Caesar, we get Carrie Preston, a slight, shrill, flibbertigibbety actress whose notion of masculinity is a high dudgeon and barely repressed rant. For Cleopatra's ladies-in-waiting, Miss Redgrave picked two of the most ungifted and unsightly actresses anyone could have ferreted out: the overweight and cloddish Fanni Green as Charmian, and the stolid and unfeminine Jennifer Wiltsie as Iras. As Cleopatra, Miss R. sports flaming-red hair in a boyish cut and plays, in the first half, everything—even pain and anger—strictly for laughs. She wears improbable costumes, which she keeps exchanging for more improbable ones, and when, late in the game, she gets down to serious business, her mannered underacting—a great deal of hoarsely monotone sotto voce—is no better than flagrant hamming. Above all, she has no idea of how to be seductively womanly. This Serpent of the Nile need not fear to see in Rome "some squeaking Cleopatra boy my greatness": She herself has already done that.

Among the many others in the cast, only Sam Tsoutsouvas and, sometimes, Ben Shenkman and Peter Francis James manage to get things right. There is also a curious performance by Don Campbell in a composite of several roles that keeps him onstage, though he speaks but little. The rest of the time, he keeps wordlessly opening and closing his mouth. At first I thought that he was ventriloquizing all the roles, but that, I realized, would have made for a more interesting evening.

Little makes sense here, from the enormous Botticelli *Madonna With Child* that graces the backdrop to the Roman Catholic music and ritual that punctuates the proceedings. John Arnone's no-period scenery is aptly supplemented by Ann Hould-Ward's every-period costuming. Enough cigars, cigarettes, and pipes are smoked to constitute a health hazard; the nonstop gimmickry, e.g., a statue's head coming off, endangers our sanity. Antony comes sliding down a diagonal rope as if he were Howard Stern, and is

Photograph by Joan Marcus.

lowered into Cleopatra's tomb on a dumbwaiter as if he were dinner.

Camcorders provide instant video, sometimes in double exposure; for Caesar's public address, there are microphones, each bearing the number of its TV channel in appositely Roman numerals. There are megaphones and sounds of helicopters overhead; orgies with kettledrums and tom-toms; after disemboweling himself, Antony, on a stretcher, exits laughing. This *Antony and Cleopatra* makes an apt prequel to a future George C. Wolfe production of *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum.*

WHOOPI GOLDBERG AS PSEUDOLUS IN **Forum** is the nonpareil of nontraditional casting. Pseudolus is male, Whoopi female; Pseudolus is white, Whoopi black; Pseudolus is a slave, Whoopi empowered as all get-out; Pseudolus acts, Whoopi doesn't bother to; Pseudolus sings, Whoopi (perhaps for problems of range) often croaks or just talks. So why such a pseudo-Pseudolus? Because Whoopi is a star, and American audiences, reviewers included, are starstruck. Adulation, especially boosted with p.c., is even blinder than love.

Of course, pretending that with a very few line changes Pseudolus can be played by and as a woman—even when leering at courtesans sexily rubbing up against her—makes zero (not Zero) sense. But the slave is also passionate about gaining his freedom, so the expectation must have been for Goldberg to bring added empathy and voltage to the role. But she merely walks through her part, taking her cue from the lilies of the field that toil not, although, as a sop to the choreographer, they do spin a little.

Whatever the case on film, where she sometimes scores, Whoopi is not a stage actress. She made it on her monologues, and in one way or another, never stopped monologuizing. In *Forum,* she is at her best in carefully scripted ad libs—grinningly to, or growlingly at the audience, often with transparent references to her persona and personal life. But she does not deliver a part. A great laugh line such as inquiring, while one looks at a wine-filled amphora, "Was one a good year?" barely elicits titters. In "He had to fall in love with a religious Cretan!" Whoopi accentuates *religious* instead of *Cretan,* and loses the pun on *cretin.*

Whoever has played Pseudolus—and many have—took all sorts of liberties, but always conveyed a sense of spontaneous exuberance to propel the show, as, for instance, when the wily slave slaveringly impersonates the procurer Marcus Lycus. With her blend of lethargy and condescension, however, Miss Goldberg does not mark us, let alone like us, very much. ■

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POP MUSIC CHRIS NORRIS

Get Smart

Is Pavement lead singer Stephen Malkmus a Gen-X spokesman? Don't label me, man! But elliptically, cryptically—and beautifully—he gets the point across.

In Pavement's music, real feeling is hidden inside thickets of allusion and dense guitars.

SOME SEVEN YEARS AFTER ITS EMERGENCE, THE term *Generation X* still rankles. Gen-Xers, as we know now, are puerile, confused, petulant, reflexively ironic, lacking in attention span, numbed by junk culture, and addicted to nachos. For people in the demographic, the only thing that's worse is being called a slacker—the closest young white males come to getting their own hate-speech epithet.

Last month, Stephen Malkmus, 29-year-old leader of the critically adored indie-rock band Pavement, was careful to tell the New York *Times* that he does *not* write from a Generation X perspective. But whether Malkmus likes it or not, Pavement's music, like Nirvana's and Beck's, is smart enough, evocative enough, and resonant enough to elevate the inane idea of a generation spokesman into something nearly credible. Its lyrics are Dylanesque tangles of poesified youth slang—evasive, jokey, full of sly import. Its songs are abstract studies in guitar and drums that reward nimble minds and obsessive listening. Embedded in all this is a mature and poetic perspective on a landscape that, for lack of a better term, is distinctly Gen-X: a place of dislocation, inauthenticity, flux, dread, and all the other clichéd pomo tropes, a place where rock is a patchwork of co-opted phrases, retarded guitar licks, "rebel" postures, and Jeep ads. And maybe, somewhere, something beautiful.

College rock? Try grad school. On Pavement's wonderful new album *Brighten the Corners,* Malkmus thanks fact checkers, throws barbs at leftist weeklies, and uses words like *infrastructure* and *echelon,* proclaiming, "I don't need your summary acts / To give into the narrative age." (Rock on!) Malkmus could be some Young Turk French academic if he weren't actually funny. Although he cites the poet John Ashbery as an inspiration, Malkmus's lyrical reach is more akin to that of David Foster Wallace. He has as many levels of discourse—exposition, stoned musing, elegy, rant, whine—as he has guitar tones. *Corners* is full of the wisecracks, longings, fears, and regrets of erudite young people moping around record stores, pondering domestic partnership, and wondering about the voice of Rush singer Geddy Lee: "How did it get so high / I wonder if he talks like an ordinary guy?"

Another aspect that puts Pavement in an unusual phylum—"mature" rock band—is that they've actually improved. While the auteurs of post-techno "electronica"—Tricky, Prodigy, Aphex Twin—are routinely being hailed for their painterly, imagistic approach to sound, Malkmus and Pavement have been doing as much for the guitar band for years. On their first album, *Slanted and Enchanted,* Pavement wrought a lo-fi manifesto, a staticky gem whose sing-along choruses, sci-fi sound effects, Sonic Youth guitar noise, and Krautrock sonics told a secret history of underground rock—a senior thesis. It refined this artful dross into the clean, gestural pop of 1994's *Crooked Rain, Crooked Rain,* then mixed brilliance with turgidness on 1995's unfairly dismissed *Wowee Zowee.*

In a similar but less schematic way than Beck, Pavement on *Brighten the Corners* reconsiders its formative pop—one song's working title was "Tusk," after its purported Fleetwood Mac vibe—and integrating it into a contemporary aesthetic. If *Corners* is, as it has been called, Pavement's "classic rock" album, its classics are refracted, gestured at, and hedged—sometimes to the music's detriment. Pavement may loathe the mantle *slacker,* but *languor,* at least, is a primary color in their palette. And *Corners*'s flaw is a slight excess of enervated grooves and fey meta-singing, a prevarication that can get pretty tiresome. Rock can also work as "rock," but not for more than about ten seconds.

While bookish intelligence is famously difficult to wear well in rock and roll, those who manage it—the early

Photograph by James Smolka.

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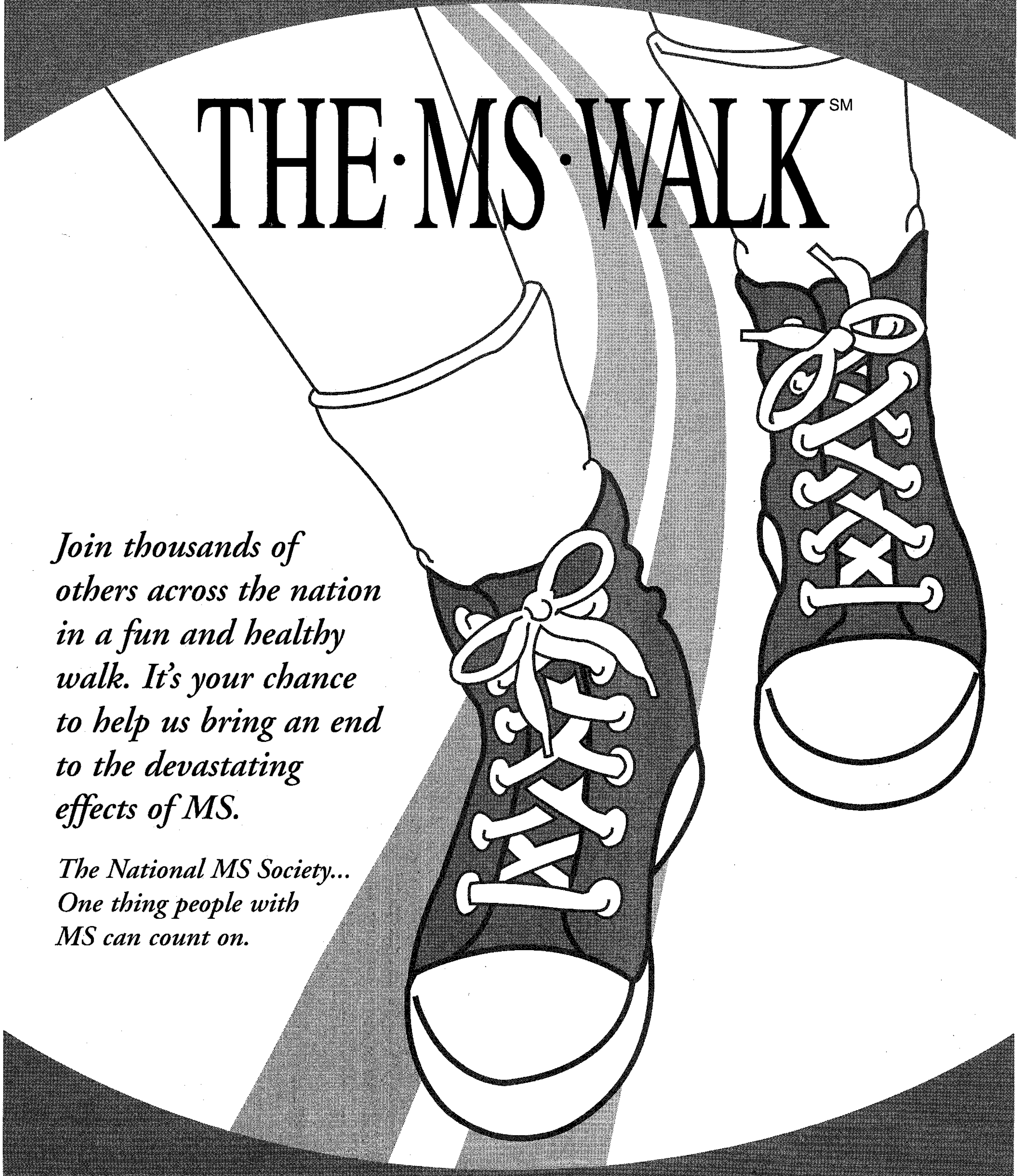

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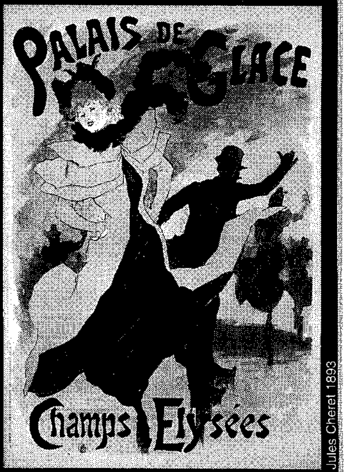

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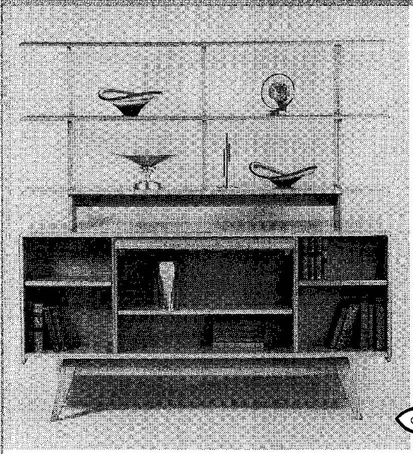

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eighties David Byrne, say—offer something pretty compelling. Malkmus manages it, usually, with a persona that's part Holden Caulfield, part Thomas Pynchon. Sometimes his falsetto yelp parodies the very idea of white-guy rock moves, but Malkmus is singer enough to imbue these guitar elegies with a real yearning. A former guard at the Whitney, Malkmus used to sit and admire not, like Jonathan Richman, the heartbreaking hues of Cézanne but the laugh riots of Cy Twombly and Richard Tuttle. Yet shrouded in all his surrealist musings is the soul of a modernist. He's grappling with actual truths—social, romantic, even spiritual—making aching gestures of love, fear, disappointment, without being the least bit "confessional." (The line "If my soul has a shape, well then it would be an ellipse" is as confessional as Malkmus gets.) "I don't want to play something painfully heartfelt over and over again on the road," he told one reporter. But then again, playful nonsense isn't worth committing to memory. In negotiating between the poles, Malkmus has managed something rare in the pop life: He has found a way to preserve his soul while surrounded by postmodernist scenery.

Corners owes its clean sound to Mitch Easter, the sonic helmsman of R.E.M.'s first and arguably best album, *Murmur.* Like their acknowledged spiritual forebears (an early Pavement song simply lists R.E.M. albums), Malkmus and his bandmates forge melodies open and heart-tugging enough to suffuse their abstract lyrics with terrible poignancy. The songs move from detailed moments to declarations that seem to promise some grand statement on man's condition but don't quite—pulling back into oblique quippery that doesn't quite dispel the mood already summoned.

Is this a Gen-X perspective? Well, yes. Malkmus has always poetically fretted over his place in culture, from the *Slanted and Enchanted* line "Can you treat it like an oil well / When it's underground, out of sight?" to *Crooked Rain*'s "Keep my advent to yourself / 'cause we need secrets." Malkmus begins the penultimate song on *Corners* with a disquieting coming-of-age: "I heard what you said / The leaders are dead." He's summoned this sense of unrest and anchorlessness before, notably in last album's gem "Rattled by the Rush." But here, it turns expansive, with a lovely, fragile image—"We are starlings in the slipstream," a notion that seems to point to something bigger, deeper, more . . . generational? Then, in a heartbeat, he rhymingly undercuts it, singing, like a lyrical Butthead, of a "spycam in a sorority / Darlings on the splitscreen." So what was that grand moment? A prayer? A joke? Malkmus is the most overinterpreted singer of his generation. There's less there than meets the eye. And more. ■

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CLASSICAL MUSIC **PETER G. DAVIS**

Flamenco Fest

The Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra invokes the elusive flamenco spirit; L'Opera Quotannis delivers Cherubini's 'Médée' in all its original glory.

Pilar Roja, dancing Spain's own.

THERE WAS DEFINITELY MUCH SOULFUL *cante jondo* to be heard onstage during the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra's recent **Flamenco Weekend** at the Academy of Music, along with the occasional punctuation of a wild *jaleo* (shout of encouragement) from the audience. But whether the orchestra, cantaora Carmen Linares, dancer Pilar Roja, and guitarists Paco Cortès and Miguel Angel Cortès actually managed to invoke the crucial flamenco spirit of *duende*—that "mysterious power which everyone senses and no philosopher explains," as García Lorca once wrote, quoting Goethe—remains a matter of opinion. Such is the elusive nature of flamenco, the generic term used to describe a body of music that is Spain's very own but whose essence, character, and origins no one can seem to agree on.

I doubt if the Brooklyn Philharmonic's earnest efforts to instruct and enlighten settled any of those long-debated questions, but the weekend's centerpiece concert, conducted by Robert Spano, gave an entertaining if necessarily limited taste of the phenomenon by offering the flamenco-influenced music of four very different twentieth-century Spanish composers. The Brooklyn Academy of Music was packed to the rafters for the occasion—this orchestra's new crossover programming policies and aggressive marketing tactics seem to be paying off, and the city's flamenco aficionados had obviously been reached. Unfortunately, from my perch high up in the top balcony I could only get a rough idea of the stage show, which ended with an elaborate song-and-dance performance of Manuel de Falla's ballet *El Amor Brujo.*

It must have been something to see up close, although this marvelous score, probably the most subtle flamenco stylization in the concert repertory, also creates a wonderful musical effect on its own. The orchestra was especially successful in capturing the music's ornamental and improvisational character, and Linares's earthy projection of the songs had enough *alma* to fill an arena. Her voice, though, suggests a vocal tone more worn than expressive of raw emotion, and her efforts eventually tired these ears. I don't always need to hear a De los Angeles or a Berganza in this music, but a seductive flamenco cantaora like Nati Mistral can get just as close to the bone while still making a musical sound.

Together with more songs from Linares, the rest of the program consisted of music considerably less sophisticated than De Falla's ballet, fluff like Carlos Surinach's *Sinfonietta Flamenca* and two dances by Turina. It's always salutary to hear anything by the nearly forgotten Roberto Gerhard, Schoenberg's only Spanish pupil, but the excerpts from his lighthearted *Alegrías* ballet are hardly typical of his later and greater music. A more adventurous program would have examined flamenco's continuing influence on Gerhard as he developed the singular concepts of rhythmic pulse that propel his exploratory and always absorbing late symphonic scores. De Falla's neoclassical *Harpsichord Concerto,* for that matter, would have stood in fascinating contrast to *El Amor Brujo*—wildly dissimilar works but both clearly coming from the same place. Well, you can't do everything in one weekend, and only the most agenda-driven flamenco fans could have left this toe-tapping concert with serious complaints.

YOU'D THINK THAT LUIGI CHERUBINI'S **Médée,** MUCH praised by Beethoven, Brahms, Weber, Schubert, Schumann, Wagner, and Puccini, would be better known. That French opera is certainly far superior to the Italian one most audiences have long accepted as Cherubini's work, a bowdlerized version of the score that was revived and returned to the international repertory in 1953, when Maria Callas first sang the title role. Since then, two productions have come and gone at the City Opera, and ambitious dramatic sopranos like Leonie Rysanek and Magda Olivero have gleefully stormed over the stage, wreaking a terrible revenge as the dreaded Colchian sorceress. If, as the music became more familiar over the years, some felt that the opera was beginning to sound like a strange musical mongrel, they were correct. What we have been hearing all this time is not the opera written in 1797 to a French text with spoken dialogue by Cherubini, an Italian classicist clearly fascinated by the coming romantic revolution, but a "modernized" version concocted in 1854 by an obscure German composer named Franz Lachner. That souped-up edition, translated into Italian, includes sung recitatives, incorporates many cuts, and seems to invite post-Callas sopranos to perform the opera like a minor Mascagni melodrama.

The original first turned up here a few years ago when L'Opéra Français de New York gave a concert version with spoken narration, but Opera Quotannis has taken that pioneering effort several steps further. To celebrate *Médée's* bicentennial this month, the group recently performed the piece in its entirety in Alice Tully Hall, with dialogue and on period instruments, a noble project that will have wider circulation when it appears this fall on a Newport Classic recording. Listeners to the discs will find that the performance, like the opera itself, builds grippingly, as the stately rituals of Créon's court are gradually reduced to chaos by Médée's frenzied obsessions and thirst for vengeance.

What one ideally wants for this taxing role is a young Régine Crespin, a French soprano with billowing vocal glamour who can still hurl out threats and imprecations with grand, searing rhetorical majesty. Phyllis Treigle's serviceable voice could only fitfully suggest all that, but she attacked the notes fearlessly and responded with honest expression to every fevered emotional situation. If the most polished singing came from D'Anna Fortunato as Néris, Médée's long-suffering slave, David Arnold's firm, attractively textured baritone made Créon's official pronouncements sound positively eloquent, and Carl Halvorson's stylish if neutral Jason was at least a pleasure to hear. The Brewer Orchestra might have played with more fire and focus, but Bart Folse paced the score shrewdly to allow the shape of the opera, with its careful alternation of speech and music, to emerge vividly. Mainly, though, the occasion proved that the real *Médée* is indeed a masterpiece. Its weak sister, the doctored *Medea* we've been hearing all these years, should now be permanently set aside. ■

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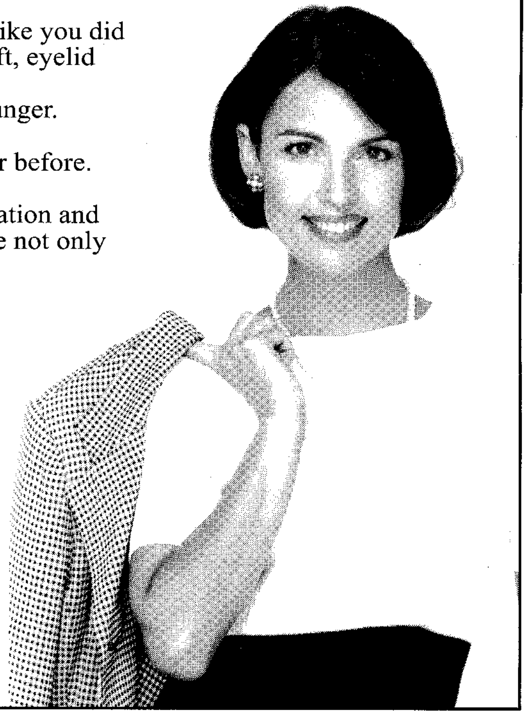

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Teen Dream

At the Joyce, Eliot Feld's callow youth movement; at St. Mark's Church, Bridgman and Packer's accomplished 'Rapid Eye Movement.'

HERE'S THE TRICK: DON'T THINK ABOUT CONventional classical ballet when you go to see **Ballet Tech,** which is performing at the Joyce through April 13. The company is the newest brainchild of Eliot Feld, who has, one way or another, rid himself of his old group—with the exceptions of its brightest stars, Darren Gibson and Buffy Miller—to form an ensemble culled from the academy he originated some two decades back. This all-expenses-paid institution is unique in recruiting its students through auditions in New York City's public primary schools, thus providing access to a dance career to kids who might otherwise have no chance at it.

Artistically, the big plus about the school is that it produces dancers who retain the vigorous spontaneity of youth. (Classical-dance training tends to squelch this.) The big minus is that even among its most accomplished graduates—the late-adolescents we're now seeing onstage—there are few qualified to join a top-notch classical company. While these youngsters display a glorious appetite for movement and powerful stage personalities, their technique is neither as strong nor as accurate as it should be. Turn-out (ballet's cornerstone), strength in the inner thigh, spring and tautness in the knees, speed and precision in the feet—all are insufficient. Unless these kids want to move on to modern dance and Broadway jazz, where, I wonder, will they go when Feld tires of *them* and turns to the next generation?

Meanwhile, Feld has choreographed a slew of new works tailored to the particular talents of his current brood. Several are set to the wild, energizing music of Bang on a Can, which, playing live at some performances, is almost the best thing about the show. A couple of the new dances, perhaps inspired by the experiments of Alwin Nikolais, lean too heavily on gimmick: *Evening Chant,* danced in the dark by black-clad bodies outlined in tiny lightbulbs, less than amusing in its idea of the constellations at play, and *Umbra Blues,* which achieves brilliant images with silhouettes (Feld gets credit for the lighting miracles) but goes on forever, shaking a (shadowy, eerily metamorphosing) leg and saying nothing. The meatiest of the pieces I saw were *Re: X,* a long solo for Jason Jordan suggesting ferocity and despair with no exit, and *Yo Shakespeare,* a duet for Jordan and Jassen Virolas about rivalry and brotherhood under tough circumstances. In these two works, Feld captures the ambience of contemporary inner-city life. They may have been inspired by the background and experience of their performers, and they are certainly useful vehicles for the young men; beyond that, though, they constitute a small but worthy contribution to the contemporary-dance repertory. The lowest state to which matters have been reduced with Feld's children's crusade is demonstrated by *Shuffle,* based on the kiddie fun of skidding and sliding on a slippery floor in socks.

IMAGINE HAVING YOUR DREAMS CHOREOGRAPHED BY PROfessional artists instead of being fabricated, ad hoc, by your overworked id, with only your daily life and its subtexts to work with. For **Rapid Eye Movement** (the title refers to the physical clue that a sleeper has phased into dream-time), presented at St. Mark's Church, Art Bridgman and Myrna Packer, longtime life partners as well as dance partners, invited a half-dozen eminent postmodern choreographers to compose dream sequences. The obliging and lavishly imaginative contributors were Mark Dendy, Vicky Shick, Ann Carlson, Bill T. Jones, Marta Renzi, and Dan Hurlin. I found Carl-

Jason Jordan and Jassen Virolas in Ballet Tech's *Yo Shakespeare.*

son's "Clock" and Renzi's "Bells" most beautiful and evocative, but all six choreographers astutely seized and amplified two basic elements in the Bridgman-Packer persona. The first is a glamour that refers to yesteryear, longing, and regret; the other, a taste for strangeness accompanied by the ability to accept the well-nigh surreal peculiarity of life as if it were perfectly ordinary.

"Bells" begins with beehive-shaped structures—actually gauzy white skirts buoyed by hoops—being tossed from the balcony that rims the St. Mark's sanctuary and wafting to the ground. A man enters and hastily appropriates them, fashioning himself an outfit of multiple petticoats and flying-saucer sleeves. A group costumed in the somber-hued, shapeless garb of the homeless looks on disapprovingly at his greed—or, perhaps, his cross-dressing impulse, or his ability to create serendipitous loveliness—and forcibly bustles him out into the church lobby. The audience sees him through the glass-paneled doors separating anteroom from sanctuary as he rushes to and fro in his prison, a desperate moth, then beats hopelessly, unavailingly for readmittance.

"Clock," the most pictorial segment of a highly image-oriented dance, centers on a huge, luminous clock face, complete with inexorable second hand. Borne on the back of a body shrouded in black that drifts slowly through the darkened space, it looks like the moon in a midnight sky; its glowing face is even mottled like the moon's. Time has become an element of nature. Accompanying the timekeeper's travels is a recorded monologue that shifts back and forth among idle chat about banal domestic travails, self-loathing mockery of "niceness," sounds of sexual pleasure, and the disconcerting noises of a man turning into a dog. Not once disrupted in its journey, the clock face strolls ineluctably on.

The elegance of the overall production must be credited to Bridgman and Packer; its beauty and sophistication could not have been bettered. The haunting chorus of "Bells" filters, sparingly, through the proceedings, a small crowd of mysterious figures, both part of the action and the action's observer-at-a-distance—just as a dreamer is, in the throes of his fantasies. This chorus meshes the discrete episodes of *Rapid Eye Movement,* as does a master-of-the-revels figure who frames the piece. At the opening, he appears on the balcony in a glimmering twilight. He wields a fishing rod with audible whipping strokes over the dancing ground below as if he were animating the space with a magic wand. At the close, he reappears, a silhouette haloed in light, his back to the scene of kaleidoscopic dreams, his arms raised as if to gather them together and preserve them from oblivion. ■

Photograph by Lois Greenfield.

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JOHN LEONARD

Pregnant Pause

An all-star nuclear family implodes in 'The Twilight of the Golds,' as Jennifer Beals weighs the pros and cons of bearing a child destined to be gay.

NOT HAVING SEEN IT ON BROADWAY, I CAN'T tell you whether **The Twilight of the Golds** (Sunday, March 23; 8 to 9:30 P.M.; Showtime) deserved the flaming it got from New York critics. But as reconceived for pop-therapeutic television, with a big-name cast and a happier ending, Jonathan Tolins's quasi-comic play about American Jewish family life, genetic probabilities, homophobia, abortion, and Wagner's *Ring* cycle has some shambling energy and several indelible moments. It's worth a visit if only to contemplate Faye Dunaway as a Jewish mother—*Eat! or I'll hit you with a hanger.* And it gets added points for proximity to the news from Scotland: To William Blake's famous question "Little Lamb who made thee?" an Edinburgh embryologist has replied, "Hello, Dolly!"

Briefly, Phyllis and Walter Gold (Dunaway and Garry Marshall) are comfortably fixed and stereotypical but apparently reconciled to the homosexuality of their son, David (Brendan Fraser), whose fanatic ambition is to mount a six-hour Off Broadway mini-version of *Der Ring des Nibelungen.* The Golds hold out more traditional hopes for the marriage of their daughter, Suzanne (Jennifer Beals), a med-school dropout and proprietor of an upscale-clothing store, to Rob (Jon Tenney), a research scientist investigating the genetic vagaries of unborn children. When Suzanne becomes pregnant, Rob runs her through the usual series of lab tests. The results, as if from Edinburgh, are ambivalent-making: Their baby will be a boy, smart and perfectly formed, though also left-handed and with a 90 percent chance of turning out "like David." That is, gay.

Such predestination without grace inspires in Suzanne misgivings, because of what her brother endured growing up; inspires in Rob something like fear and loathing, as well as doubts about his profession; inspires in Phyllis and Walter a numb shock they handle in the worst way; and inspires in David a rage at his parents (on learning they still feel he's "sick and diseased"), at his sister (if she aborts, she is in effect killing *him*), at his own companion, Steven (Sean O'Bryan), who seeks to mediate, and ultimately at himself: "Am I so great? Should there really be more of me in the world?" We are also permitted the perspectives of Suzanne's partner at the clothing store (Rosie O'Donnell), who can't have children of her own, and of Rob's Orthodox Jewish father (Jack Klugman), who thinks that genetic research of any sort smacks of Nazi eugenics.

Omitted from this calculus of raw egos and bad faith is, of course, Suzanne, who embodies its critical mass. Is she merely a mother-machine preprogrammed for gestating the desires and despairs of parents, husband, sibling? A microwave oven for freeze-dried DNA? A Magic Slate on whom they scrawl their qualms? As played by Beals, who looks somehow even younger than she did as the twinkle-toes welder in *Flashdance* (1983), Suzanne seems to sleepwalk through the first hour of the movie, bullied and bruised by the neediness of everybody else. But as played for television, *The Twilight of the Golds* ends up being a drama of her emerging awareness of her own moral agency. As always, TV is pro-choice. And equally as always—at least in the aftermath of *Maude*—that choice is pro-fetal. After which, except for Rob, they'll all enjoy *Der Ring.*

Never mind Wagner, through whose "magic fire" our heroine must pass to prove herself. David's staging of the abbreviated cycle—sponsored by Blimpie's!—works better as a sight gag than it does as a symbolic subtext, although the auditions are hilarious. And never mind, either, yours and my skepticism about that implausibly precise "90 percent" probability of same-sex preference. ("Doctors!" says

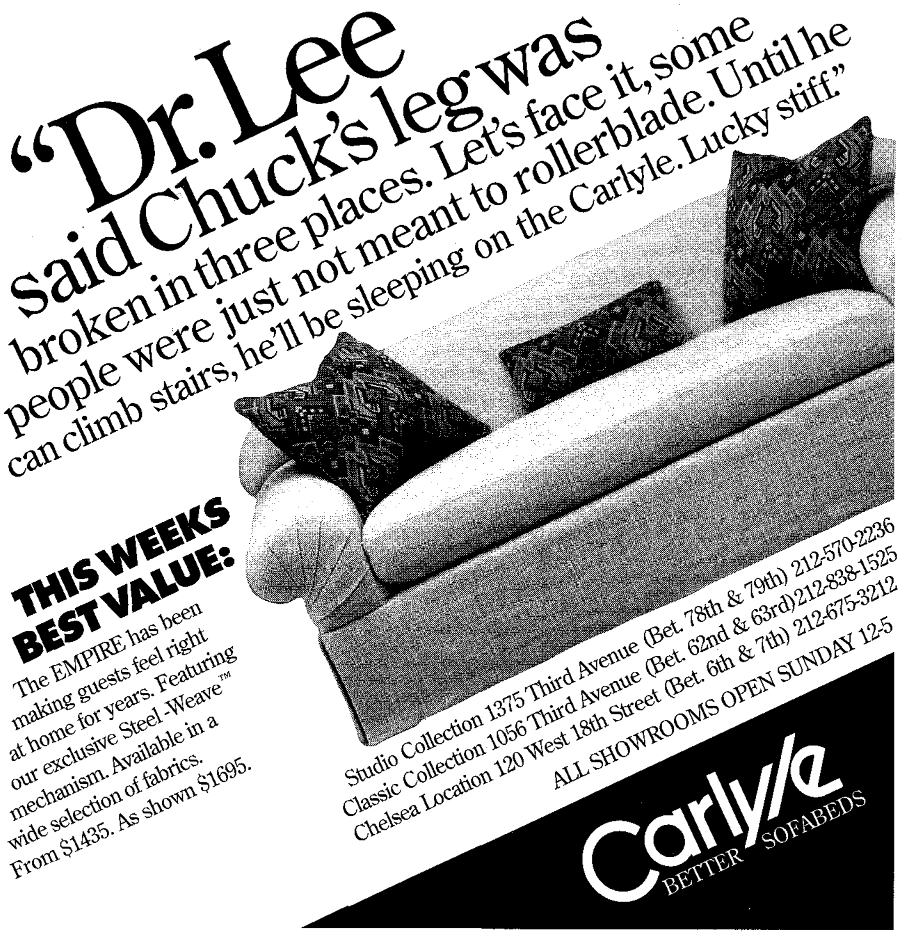
Soap opera: Marshall and Dunaway (top), Fraser and Beals (below), in *The Twilight of the Golds.*

Photograph by Anne Fishbein/Showtime.

Faye. "They're never sure. They just tell you enough to destroy you.") From Dunaway, Marshall, Fraser, Tenney, and Klugman, director Ross Marks has elicited surprisingly strong performances, and from Beals, a fragile grace. At its best, *The Twilight of the Golds* will remind you of early Philip Roth: *Goodbye, Bayreuth,* maybe. Meanwhile, in Scotland and elsewhere, biotechnology has already invaded the amniotic sac; they're messing with our eggs. It would be nice to think that all parents and grandparents, contemplating the birth of any sort of child, would pledge themselves to make the world a safer place for strangers. We seem to grow instead more fearful and suspicious.

Which perhaps accounts for the watery closet of the Olympic diver portrayed by Mario Lopez in **Breaking the Surface: The Greg Louganis Story** (Wednesday, March 19; 9 to 11 P.M.; USA). As Louganis tells his own tale in the autobiography from which this biopic derives, he was not only adopted, dyslexic, and darkly half Samoan but so unhappy in high school he tried to kill himself with sleeping pills. Nor was his designated father, played by a swollen, resentful, chain-smoking Michael Murphy, especially enthusiastic about the mildewed boy till he started bringing home those silver medals. So Greg's passed along from one coach (Fulvio Cecere) to another (Aki Aleong) to a third (Bruce Weitz), unto the live-in lover (Jeff Meek as "Tom") who exploits his emotional callowness and secures his power of attorney. Only a combination of his father's lung cancer and his own HIV-positive diagnosis disenthralls Greg from Tom and moves him to out himself before the gay-pride tabloids do it for him. Left unanswered in this rather whiny movie is the obvious Jonathan Tolins sort of question: Would such a father have loved his gay son if that son hadn't been the best in the world at getting wet headfirst? How many of us will ever be the best in the world at anything? Kudos, nonetheless, to USA cable for breaking its own lurid mold.

AT THE RISK OF RIDICULE, LET ME ALSO recommend **Buffy the Vampire Slayer** (Mondays, 8 to 9 P.M.; WB), which picks up where the 1992 movie left off, with Sarah Michelle Gellar instead of Kristy Swanson as teenaged Buffy, and Anthony Stewart Head instead of Donald Sutherland as her mentor in Southern California sucker-staking. These two must stave off a "harvest" of zombies, werewolves and succubi, while telling Emily Dickinson and Jehovah's Witness jokes. ("Nobody cool has Epstein-Barr anymore.") So far, *Buffy* is more fun than the TV *Clueless* and *Sabrina the Teenage Witch,* a sort of Valley Girl *Millennium.* Or *Heathers* with feathers. ■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RESTAURANTS **HAL RUBENSTEIN**

Feasts for the Eyes

The décor at Opaline and at Torre di Pisa is so dramatic it could overwhelm the food—but if you let it, you'll be missing something.

JUST AS A MUSICAL IS DOOMED IF THEATERGOERS leave humming the scenery (well, it should be!), can a restaurant's décor be its kitchen's adversary?

Does anyone go to Tavern on the Green for the food? That the current chef, Patrick Clark, has proven talent is more amusing than relevant. He could just as easily be Mary Richards perpetually reprising the Mary-has-a-dinner-party episode where she doesn't make enough veal Prince Orloff: What most folks feast on at Tavern is the chandeliers.

Should relatives start swooning over the Rainbow Room, you can bet their last Rosemary Clooney album it's about the view or that rotating dance floor, not the improved menu.

The original Le Cirque always had better food than most of its clientele desired, or could discern. The real feeding frenzy there more often savored the seating plan, the fanciful plates, and the tense energy that surrounded them.

Maybe the reason Horn and Hardart finally gave up on the Automat was that one of the last ad campaigns for the no-visual-frills chain featured the tag line YOU CAN'T EAT ATMOSPHERE. And Brooke Shields will never have a hit series.

Theatrical style in the East Village: Opaline's angular architecture is as striking as its cuisine.

Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

Sit facing the bar at **Opaline** (85 Avenue A; 475-5050), and it's impossible to take your eyes off the hovering pyramid of TV sets above, insistently tuned to the same channel. Not like there's nothing else to distract you. Once you've ventured down the steps to Opaline's basement entrance on Avenue A, through a hallway of shadowy Caligari-like angularity, and past a lounge in which Aubrey Beardsley might feel right at home, it's a shock, though a happy one, to walk smack into a grand-café-size, two-story-high, multilevel, skylit dining room. The ceiling is dominated by a series of fans driven by an integrated pulley system. The wainscoted walls offer enough gray variations to pass for an homage to Giorgio Armani. Frosted glass sections the room both handsomely and decisively. Deeply curved booths are channel-quilted to an almost intimidating height. Huge mirrors are angled in uneasy repose. Large paintings, elliptical and seductive, are blatantly at odds with the room's boxlike geometry. The combined effect could be labeled industrial-strength Romanticism. If Opaline ever becomes a dinner theater, its first production should be *Sweeney Todd.*

Since the setting is so deliberately theatrical that one quickly forgets that the East Village of Veselka and Life Cafe is on the other side of that skylight, it's natural to expect a menu of comparable drama. And yet Opaline serves the fare of a heartwarming French country kitchen. The flavors are soft and hinted rather than bold. Seasoning is not going to hold your breath hostage. In fact, in order to appreciate the kitchen, it's imperative that you take your eyes off the TV tower. Stay glued, and you're going to miss some gentle, soothing meals.

Satiation, not revelation, is the goal of a soup as earnest and confidently earthbound as potato and celery root, yet the brisk taste of Granny Smith apples turns the pale, thick broth buoyant. A moist, charred-to-mahogany-bronze leg and thigh of duck confit and some weightless frisée are bridged by a dense truffle vinaigrette. Mussels thrive in a fresh-tomato broth, sweet with garlic and herbs one night, that sadly tastes canned the next (and not even by Progresso). The seared-tuna salad offers some fresh, garnet-rare yet almost arrogantly bland tuna. (Note: Is the sudden and almost ubiquitous banishment of salt shakers a cost-cutting gesture? A chef-inspired mass movement? Would they prefer we fall in love with marjoram? Do they realize how many of their soups of the day need those white crystals more desperately than Penn needs Teller? Hey, waiter! Give me back that shaker and keep your hands off!)

One appetizer is absolutely super. The kitchen can call it a crêpe until Giuliani tries on those heels again, but it's actually a blintz, of rich yet airily velvet farmer cheese, which finds its unexpected soulmate in an ungainly and completely appealing chunk of braised lamb.

A grilled-chicken-breast salad is elevated from harmless mundanity by wedges of portobellos. Herb-roasted chicken gets dragged through celery-root purée to its and your ensuing delight. The heady, overpowering flavor of salmon turns, if not exactly subtle, then more insinuating, heated over red lentils cooked in red wine. Perhaps it's the brown butter, but monkfish comes off eerily like roasted potatoes. Better to opt for a simple snapper, enhanced only by spinach, chive, and lemon. Though Opaline's prices are very reasonable for non–East Villagers, I'd be willing to pay a couple of bucks extra and have more good stuff than beans in my cassoulet. Opaline's version is burdened by a Stouffer's-like stinginess with meat and yet another pallid tomato sauce. But the delicious braised lamb returns, this time accompanied by equally well-made whipped potatoes. A grilled hamburger arrives not merely sitting on its bun but up to the challenge of satisfying the urge when this craving hits.

Chocolate-soufflé cake, now in danger of tirami-suian overexposure, hasn't worn out its welcome just yet; a pear tart and a pear-and-almond tart are, not surprisingly, the result of house strengths. The warm banana financier (sponge cake) with coconut ice cream is more interesting than it sounds, but not as rapture-inducing as it looks. Better than that—or the crème brûlées, sorbets, and ice creams, for that matter—is an unassuming cookie plate, crunchy, dense, and unturn-downably rich; bag three platefuls of these, and Pepperidge Farm might as well sell the farm. If Sweeney Todd ever shows up, one bite will be all it takes to convert him from those meat pies. That is, if someone can tear him away from fixating on those fan blades.

Opaline, 6 to 11 P.M. Sunday through Thursday, 6 P.M. to 1 A.M. weekends. Bar-and-lounge menu every night till 2 A.M.

TO BE BLUNT, THE ORIGINAL TORRE DI PISA in Milan is a dump, a clumsy amalgam of gerrymandered rooms you must navigate haltingly, always shifting your weight as if skating backward for the first time. The kitchen, however, is honest, consistent, almost blustery in its confidence. You couldn't have a bad meal there if you knocked it over and ate off the floor.

While one hardly expected the New York outpost to Xerox a restaurant that doesn't know from design, nor did any Milanese regular imagine designer David Rockwell's relentlessly off-kilter take on Alice in Pisaland. Blue plates float in formation in front of gold-brocaded walls; an archway appears soon to crash across the entrance; heavily angled chairs, upholstered like mini-sofas, comfy as thrones, surround dining tables. An emphatically large town clock looms, insisting on the correct time. A village beckons in the distance. Backlighting puts everything into high relief, particularly at dinnertime. **Torre di Pisa** (19 West 44th Street; 398-4400) could be a float for a postmodern San Gennaro Festival.

Unfortunately, so unabashedly theatrical is this visual conceit (not unlike Rockwell's design for Vong) that a potential customer, this one included, has good reason to fear that dining at Torre di Pisa could be all flash with none in the pan; that instead of reaping the cultivated aromas of the old country, one will be party to something akin to painting the roses red.

But Torre di Pisa is no joke. From the crackle of its wonderful fried artichokes to the brawny mix of broccoli rabe, roasted garlic, pancetta, and pecorino in a memorable farinacci, on to buttery calf's liver glistening in caramelized polenta, and ending in the best tirami su you may ever know, this has to be Manhattan's best, currently undiscovered theater restaurant (lunch is busy; dinner is not).

There's more than one excellent meal to be had, too. Mussel soup, perfumed by saffron, will have you flicking shells with the speed of someone out of Hemingway. Roasted-onion soup waits till it's almost down your throat to release a quiet, smile-inducing essence of almonds. Calimari is grilled clean with a fragrant shot of pesto. Chicken-and-sun-dried-tomato ravioli suffers from none of the dryness that often affects this dish at other houses. Crushed red pepper and garlic ignite happily undercooked shrimp in spaghetti (pastas tend to be priced a little high, however).

Poppy-seed-encrusted tuna is too much of not so great a thing. But monkfish osso buco is an experiment with a much happier ending. You have to slow yourself down from eating the rack of New Zealand lamb too quickly. The Chianti sauce causes people to work those bones like batons. Baby chicken gets a boost from currants and apricots. A rib eye is so beautifully aged and grilled it needs no boost. And if you covet salmon with black olives and fennel, you're a stronger man than I, Gunga Din. But it takes real courage to tackle the unlikely, unbelievably rich combination of tenderloin, mozzarella, and porcini mushrooms called Fogotto.

Nice people work at Torre di Pisa. Not fast. Nice. Which means that when you order the spectacular tirami su or apple cake that would give anyone's grandmother an inferiority complex, or a superb pear tart, ask for the check right away, or you could be late for that musical. We don't want you to miss a single chandelier, er, song.

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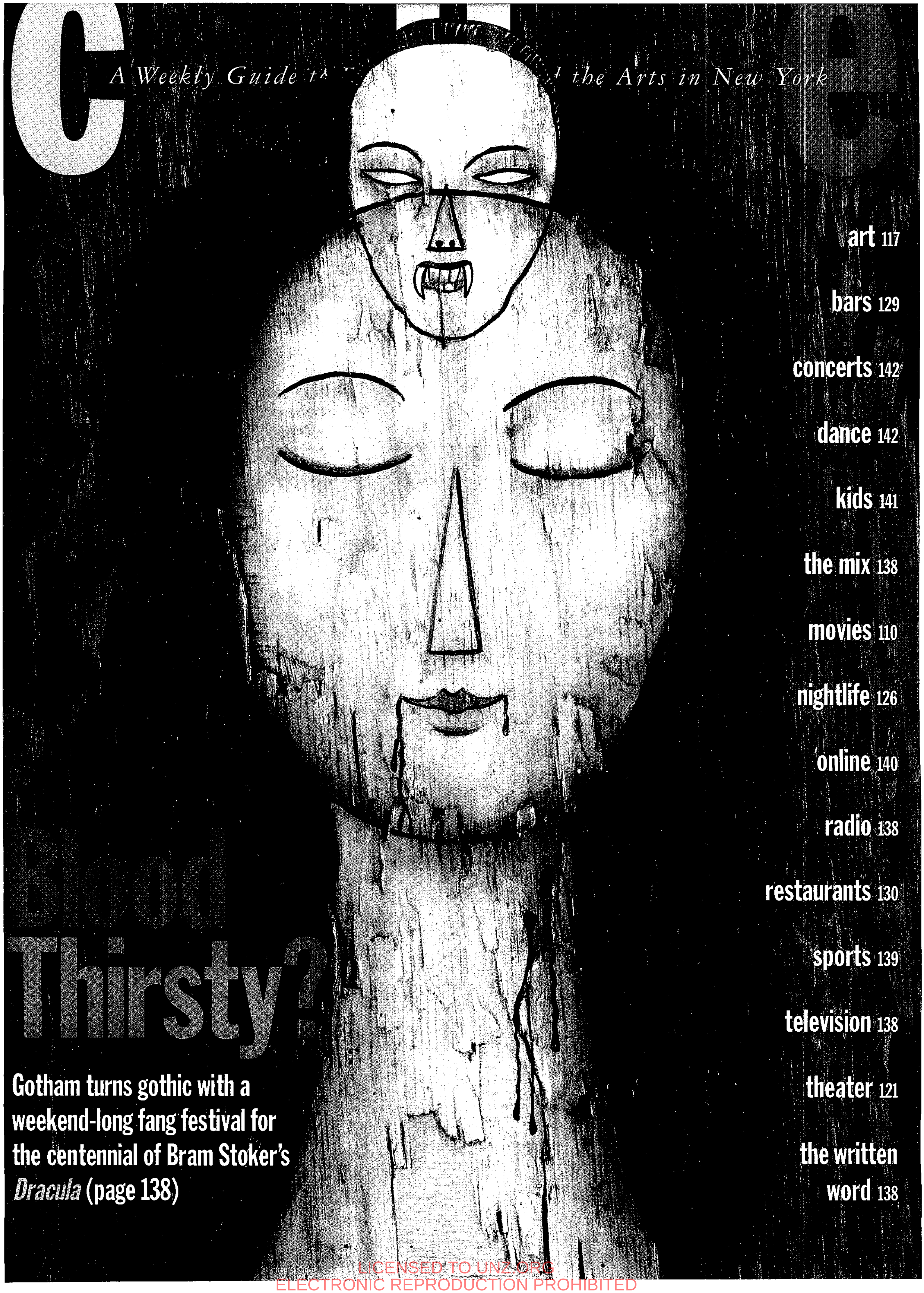

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Blood Thirsty?

Gotham turns gothic with a weekend-long fang festival for the centennial of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (page 138)

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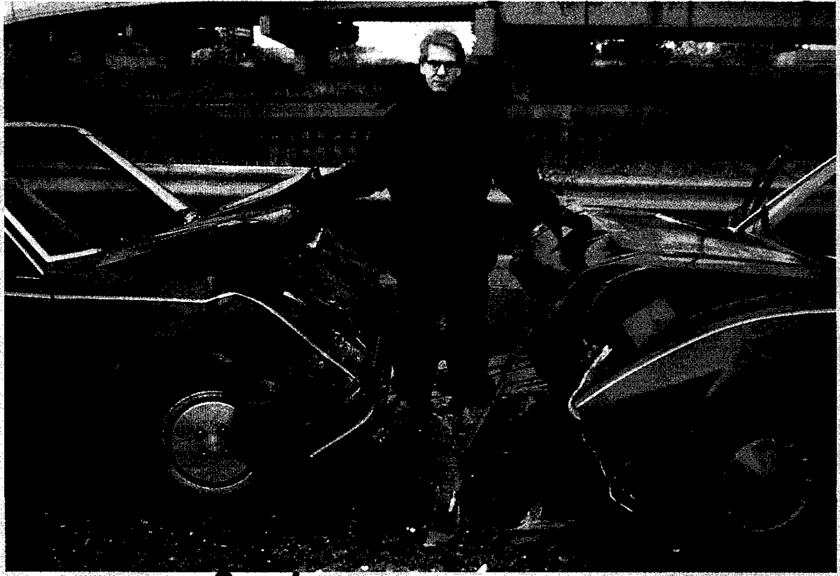


Opening
Auto Erotica

In *Crash,* James Spader (above) is James, a member of a select group of young men and women who orchestrate and participate in elaborate car crashes as a sort of foreplay—the ultimate exploration of sex and death, if you will. David Cronenberg's unflinching adaptation of J. G. Ballard's incendiary novel was awarded a special prize at Cannes for "originality, audacity, and daring"—to the delight of some and the chagrin of others. Opens Friday.

Photograph by J. Wenk/Fine Line Features.

New Films

★**Absolute Power**—Clint Eastwood's latest work as director and star has a terrific opening sequence. Clint, wearing his years with increasing grace, plays a serious career thief who spends much of his time in museums. With no apparent fuss or fear, the thief enters a Washington, D.C., mansion, disables the elaborate security system, and penetrates a treasure-filled vault situated behind a two-way mirror. Happily emptying jewelry and cash into his sack, he suddenly realizes, to his horror, that the young mistress of the house has returned with a very powerful and famous man, and that she plans to have carnal relations with that man on the other side of the mirror, only a few feet away. When the sex gets rough, and then violent, and then ends in murder, the thief passes through various stages of prurient interest, fear, and disgust. What makes this neo-Hitchcockian episode successful is Eastwood's adherence to the old-fashioned notion that the respective positions of two people or forces threatening one another should be clearly visible to the audience. Here Eastwood calmly, methodically lays out a sensational scene, keeping the space clear and distinct, so we can enjoy the thief's fear of exposure, the moral ambiguity of the violator passively watching the greater violation—and then on to the scene's murderous conclusion and its coda detailing the thief's attempted escape. Alas, nothing else in the movie is as good as this long opening sequence. (Denby; 2/17/97) (2 hrs. 1 min.; R) *Village Theatre VII; Murray Hill Cinemas; Criterion Center; Gemini; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; Metro Cinema.*

Booty Call—Jamie Foxx and Tommy Davidson star in this comedy about two men haplessly in search of sex, and the women who won't give it to them. (1 hr. 17 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; Chelsea; Criterion Center; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; New Coliseum; Nova; Olympia Theatre; Plaza Twin.*

Boys Life 2—Four gay-themed shorts about the trials of adolescence. With Mary Beth Hurt, Vincent D'Onofrio, and Eileen Brennan. (1 hr. 14 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

Breaking the Waves—Lars von Triers's bizarre love story about a sheltered Calvinist girl who believes she can make her paralyzed husband walk again by taking other lovers. Starring Emily Watson and Stellan Skarsgard. (2 hrs. 36 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Eastside Playhouse.*

★**La Cérémonie**—Claude Chabrol has made many malicious thrillers in his long career, but he's never worked before with this kind of devastating malevolence. In the opening scene, Catherine (Jacqueline Bisset), a very well turned-out upper-bourgeois lady, meets Sophie (Sandrine Bonnaire), a prospective housekeeper, and persuades her to come work in her big house in Brittany. Sophie moves in with the family, and after a while, everything begins to go haywire. Sophie, it turns out, attracts a woman friend—a local postal clerk, Jeanne (Isabelle Huppert), who is as chatty and assertive as Sophie is morose and reserved. At first, Jeanne and Sophie, who form a secret friendship, might seem like slightly eccentric outsiders. But their friendship, we find out, is held together by each of their having gotten away, in the past, with a serious crime, and their pranks seem meaner and meaner. In the hands of these two, civilization falls to pieces. itself. (Denby; 1/20/97) (1 hr. 51 mins.; NR) *Angelika 57.*

City of Industry—An ex-con (Harvey Keitel) is lured back into thievery by his aspiring younger brother (Timothy Hutton). Directed by John Irvin. (1 hr. 37 mins.; NR) *Village East; Embassy 1; Manhattan Twin; 84th Street.*

Crash—David Cronenberg's adaptation of the J. G. Ballard novel about men and women who become sexually aroused by car collisions. With James Spader and Rosanna Arquette. (1 hr. 40 mins.; NC-17). *Opens Friday.*

★**Dante's Peak**—Out there in the Pacific Northwest, in the idyllic, clear-aired town of Dante's Peak, which is at the base of a dormant volcano, Linda Hamilton is the mayor, and Pierce Brosnan shows up, a handsome but troubled volcanologist. Director Roger Donaldson stages a fine scene in which a raging river sweeps away a bridge and a man trapped on the bridge has a passing moment of recognition in which he accepts his fate. *Dante's Peak* is movieish, corny, imitative, and absurdly plotted, but here and there, the movie strikes a genuine note of awe. (Denby; 2/17/97) (1 hr. 49 mins.; PG-13) *First & 62nd St. Cinema.*

The Daytrippers—A young woman, concerned that her husband is cheating on her, heads into Manhattan to trail him—with her entire family in tow. With Anne Meara, Parker Posey, Stanley Tucci, Campbell Scott, and Hope Davis. Directed by Greg Mottola. (1 hr. 27 mins.; NR) *Angelika Film Center; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

★**Donnie Brasco**—Set in the late seventies and early eighties, and based on a true story, *Donnie Brasco* catches the mob at a period of confusion and relative decline. These men are not crime lords but thieves and murderers imprisoned by myths that have long since worn out. The ace screenwriter Paul Attanasio has built a wonderful emblematic figure—a new movie icon of failure—out of the mobster Lefty Ruggiero (Al Pacino). Lefty is a longtime hitman, but his authority is now dwindling; he's been repeatedly passed over, and he grumbles like a corporate hotshot who got a corner office when young but somehow never made vice-president. Everyone has heard his complaints, and no one cares. When Lefty meets an outsider, the svelte young jewel thief Donnie Brasco (Johnny Depp), who listens to him and seems to admire him, he warms up to Donnie immediately. Lefty sets about getting the young man accepted into the mob. What he doesn't realize is that Donnie is

Ground Rules:

These brief reviews, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by David Denby...A ★ denotes a current release that *New York* recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element...Reviews are followed by the Manhattan theaters where the film is playing.

"CUE" COVER ILLUSTRATION BY STEFANO VITALE
FOR *NEW YORK*

an FBI agent. At the heart of the movie is the relationship between the two characters, and two actors. Pacino's performance is a beautiful piece of work—moving, in part, because it is offered utterly without irony or condescension. Lefty may be a murdering fool, but Pacino knows that even a fool longs for dignity and tries to justify himself. As Donnie, Johnny Depp is very graceful, with a knifelike speed in violent moments. We can believe that the mob might take him for a tough, ambitious young hood—he has the wariness and self-confidence that create an aura. And Depp's emotional reticence works for the role. We can't tell after a while whether Donnie wants to nail these hoods or become one of them. He's in very deep, caught in the stupid but mesmerizing tangle of betrayal and violence. The rubouts, the eroticized power—it beats anything his family, even his wife, can offer. Donnie doesn't want to live without that danger and excitement, and he turns his family feelings to Lefty, who needs him. Director Mike Newell doesn't take many risks with the camera, and there are no wild flights, no outbreaks of Scorsesean poetry. But this movie is coherent and emotionally satisfying—a good, realistic gangster film, just when everyone thought the genre was exhausted. (Denby; 3/17/97) (2 hrs. 1 min.; R) *Village East; 19th Street East; Murray Hill Cinemas; Criterion Center; Gemini; UA East; Lincoln Square.*

Drunks—An ensemble piece set during a highly charged A.A. meeting. With Richard Lewis, Dianne Weist, and Faye Dunaway. (1 hr. 29 mins.; R) *Quad Cinema.*

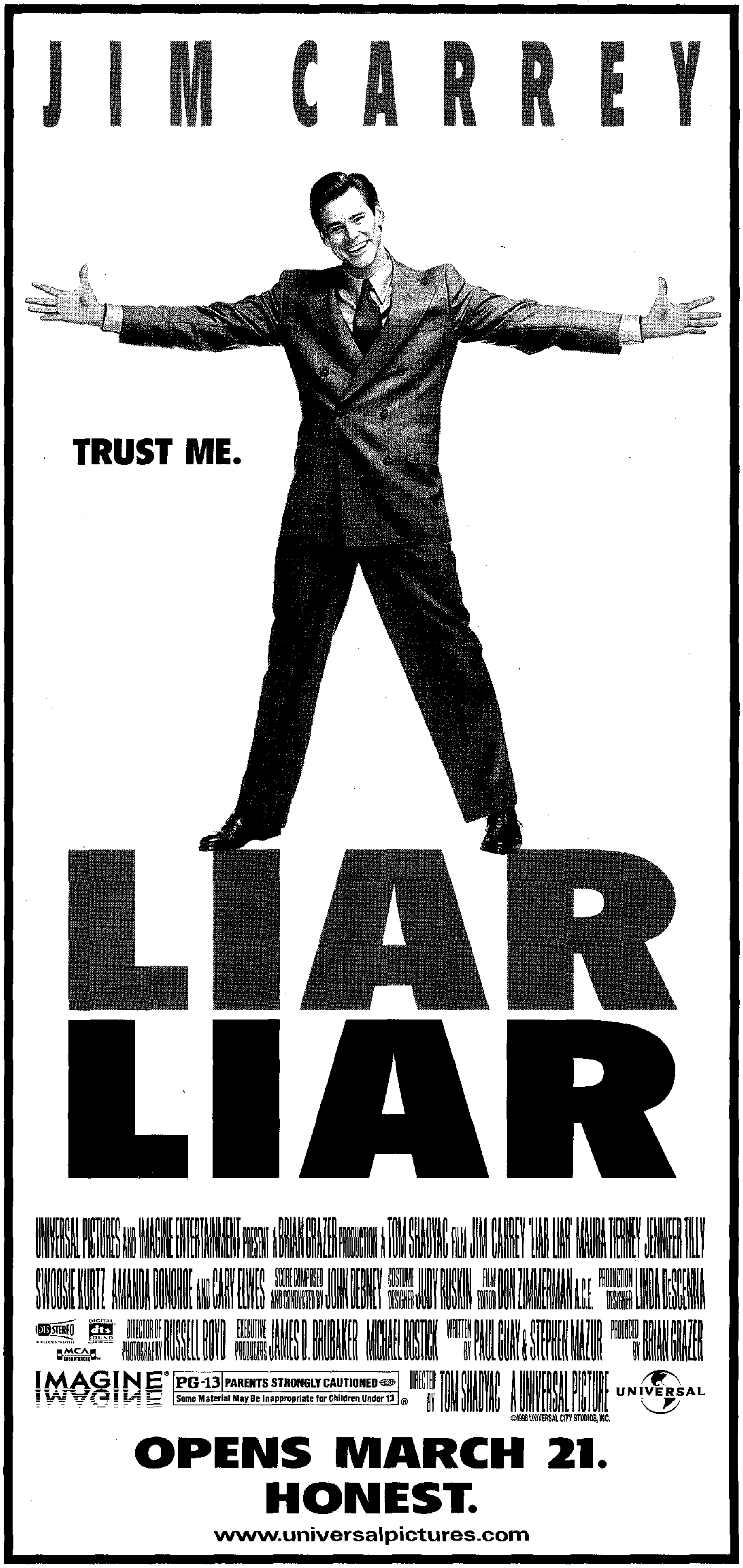
★**The Empire Strikes Back**—The second installment in George Lucas's *Star Wars* trilogy. (2 hrs. 7 mins.; PG) *Village East; 34th Street Showplace; Chelsea; Crown Gotham; National Theatre; 86th Street; 84th Street; Brooklyn Heights; Pavilion Theatre.*

★**The English Patient**—In Italy, in October 1944, the French-Canadian nurse Hana (Juliette Binoche) tends, in his final days, a mysterious "English patient" whose body was horribly burned when he was shot out of the sky by the Germans. The patient (Ralph Fiennes) is actually not English but a Hungarian count. Before the war, Count Almasy had led a party of European explorers and mapmakers in the Sahara—a highly fashionable and educated group, including the crisply articulate married beauty Katharine Clifton (Kristin Scott Thomas). As Almasy lies dying in Italy, he recounts to Hana the story of his passionate affair with Katharine, which brought ruin on everyone. Fiennes's count is a formal and demanding fellow, witty but not good-humored. As Katharine, Kristin Scott Thomas has a bladelike finesse and strength. She provokes Fiennes, teases his rigid formality, and she is provoked herself, stirred by something proud and romantic in his nature. After a very tense and even wounding dance of flirtation, these two make love, and we can see that the freedom of the screen—so much derided recently—actually means something. (Denby; 11/25/96) (2 hrs. 39 mins.; R) *Village East; Chelsea; Murray Hill Cinemas; Embassy 2–4; 86th Street; New York Twin; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Everyone Says I Love You—In movies, when ordinary speech seems inadequate, singing and dancing become the strongest way of saying something. But in Woody Allen's new musical, the gesture toward song or dance is meant to be enough. So Allen uses actors with no training as singers, actors who may have never sung professionally in their lives—Allen himself, Julia Roberts, Tim Roth, Alan Alda, and many others—and they warble in their thin little voices, which barely reach the microphone, and there's no exhilaration, no release. The movie is a comedy about a large, rich, mixed-up New York family (Alan Alda is the paterfamilias), with first marriages, second marriages, stepchildren, and friends, all of them falling in and out of love, usually at the drop of a hat. The movie is easy to sit through and hard to get excited about. (Denby; 12/9/96) (1 hr. 47 mins.; R) *Screening Room; New York Twin.*

Fools Rush In—Matthew Perry and Salma Hayek star in this comedy about a young couple who get married after a one-night stand results in pregnancy. Directed by Andy Tennant. (1 hr. 46 mins.; PG-13) *Sutton.*

Gentlemen Don't Eat Poets—Sting stars as a butler who, with his wife, disrupts the genteel life of an



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aristocratic family in forties Britain. (1 hr. 38 mins.; R) *Waverly.*

★**The Godfather**—The twenty-fifth anniversary rerelease of Francis Ford Coppola's Mafia classic. (2 hrs. 55 mins.; R). *Opens Friday.*

★**Hamlet**—In the new *Hamlet,* Kenneth Branagh is an extroverted prince, bold, brazen, often noisy, a man who dominates every conversation and enjoys putting people on. Branagh updates the setting from medieval times and a shadowed, cavelike palace to the nineteenth century and a full-dress court that is brilliantly lit. As the principals plot and scheme and manipulate one another, we are never allowed to forget that the future of the state is at issue. Claudius has not just killed Hamlet's father; he has denied Hamlet the throne. This Hamlet very much wants to be king. The play, of course, is exhaustingly long, and the lack of intimacy in Branagh's conception places added stress on our endurance. Yet there are many brilliant moments. (Denby; 1/6/97) (4 hrs. ; PG-13) *Paris Theater.*

★**Jerry Maguire**—The huge amounts of money sports agents can snag for their clients in multiyear contracts and endorsements drives everyone crazy—and none more so than the great Jerry Maguire (Tom Cruise), who keeps his high clear and pure in a steady stream of winning, adulation, and sex, all the while humbling himself in ecstasies of subordination. Jerry, as it turns out, is miserable. He writes a soul-searching memo—a "mission statement"—and distributes it to the entire company, asking that they handle fewer clients and give them more personal attention. Jerry is thrown out within a week. Everyone drops him except for a single client, Rod Tidwell (Cuba Gooding, Jr.), who is a promising pro player but not quite a star. And Dorothy (Renee Zellweger), an accountant from the office, stays with Jerry, too, and falls in love with him. Written and directed by Cameron Crowe, *Jerry Maguire* captures the American whirlwind of success better than anything in recent movies. At the same time, Crowe shows a striking gift for intimacy. This is a terrifically alert movie, hip to the way people feel about one another from moment to moment. (Denby; 12/16/96) (2 hrs. 20 mins.; R) *Waverly; 19th Street East; Criterion Center; Gemini; Lincoln Square.*

Jungle 2 Jungle—Tim Allen plays a New York executive who discovers he has a 12-year-old son living in the jungles of the Amazon. (1 hr. 45 mins.; PG) *Village East; 19th Street East; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; Embassy 2–4; 86th Street East; Lincoln Square; Metro Cinema; New Coliseum; Nova; Pavilion Theatre; Plaza .*

Kama Sutra—Two women in ancient India—one queen, the other slave—compete for the king's love. Directed by Mira Nair. (1 hr. 54 mins.; NR) *Lincoln Square.*

★**Kolya**—This hero of this loving and touching Czech film—set in 1988, only a year before the Velvet Revolution—Franta (Zdenek Sverak), a man who has lived with dismay for so long that he remains, to the very end, blind to the signs that the Soviets are losing their grip. A great musician, he was once a cellist in the Czech Philharmonic, but he was tossed out—for heroic resistance, his girlfriends think, but actually for making an offhand remark that offended a Prague bureaucrat. Completely broke, Franta agrees to marry, for good money, a Russian woman who needs Czech papers. As soon as the wedding comes off, however, Franta's wife flees Prague for a lover in West Germany; she leaves behind a 5-year-old boy, Kolya, who speaks nothing but Russian. The great seducer and eternal bachelor—a man who calls one married woman after another at night, looking for an absent husband— is reduced to giving baths to a lovelorn child he can't speak to. The movie, of course, is a comedy of male selfishness, a Czech version of the Dustin Hoffman—Justin Henry scenes in *Kramer vs. Kramer,* though made with a finer, lighter touch and an absence of obvious sentiment. (Denby; 2/10/97) (1 hr. 50 mins.; PG-13) *Village East; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Liar, Liar—Jim Carrey stars as a compulsive liar who, at the behest of his son, must spend one 24-hour period without uttering a single untruth. Directed by Tom Shadyac. (1 hr. 26 mins.; PG-13). *Opens Friday.*

Lost Highway—In David Lynch's new movie, a man (Bill Pullman) who is sent to prison for murdering his wife (but did he really murder her?) is transformed, somehow, into a younger man (Balthazar Getty) who falls in love with what appears to be the same woman, who . . . David Lynch may be a failure as an artist, but he's not a phony. In this two-hour narrative movie, he has sustained the obsessional weirdness of his most extreme works. Patricia Arquette and Pullman play a married couple living together in intense silence and distrust. Pullman is all awareness, and Arquette seems completely drugged, so they make a provocative and unstable combination. Erotic tension gathers in the blank spaces between their words. The couple begins receiving videotapes, first of the exterior of the house, then of the interior and the two of them in bed. Some sort of intruder is plaguing them, and we gather he has a mysterious connection to Arquette's past. This mix of voyeurism and violation could easily power a great erotic thriller—but then Lynch lets everything go but the eroticism. He escapes into visual fantasia, and we get the usual menacing Lynchian soundtrack, with its moaning wind-tunnel relentlessness. The picture is a virtuoso exercise in spooky unintelligibility. (Denby; 3/3/97) (2 hrs. 15 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 34th Street East; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Square.*

Love Jones—Larenz Tate and Nia Long play two young singles who have what they think is a one-night stand; then they start to fall in love. Written and directed by Theodore Witcher. (1 hr. 13 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 19th Street East; Criterion Center; Manhattan Twin; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; New Coliseum; Nova; Plaza Twin.*

Mandela—A documentary about Nelson Mandela, in which South Africa's president tells the story of his life. Directed by Jo Menell and Angus Gibson. (2 hrs.; NR). *Angelika 57; Cinema Village 12th St.*

Marvin's Room—Diane Keaton and Meryl Streep star as estranged sisters who struggle to reconcile when one is faced with a terminal illness. With Leonardo Di Caprio. (1 hr. 38 mins.; PG-13) *Village East; Guild 50th Street; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Regency; Pavilion Theatre.*

Prisoner of the Mountains—A company of armed Russians fighting in the war with Chechnya is ambushed by the rebels; two Russian soldiers survive and are held as prisoners in a Muslim village in the Caucasus Mountains. The older one, Sacha (Oleg Menshnikov), a professional soldier with a devil-may-care attitude, is disgusted by Vania (Sergei Bodrov Jr.), the raw recruit he's stuck with. Sacha is violent, witty, and experienced, Vania a lamb caught in a life-and-death situation. The village elder, an enormous, fierce-looking man (Jemel Sikharulidze), wants to keep them alive so he can trade them for his son, who is held prisoner by the Russians nearby. The director, Sergei Bodrov, needs to tighten his grip on basic technique; his casualness is cut off from meaning. The humanist message—that what holds people together is more important than the political and religious differences that divide them—seems a little wan and perfunctory when your technique is better at conveying chaos than

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Opening

Full Nelson

Jonathan Demme was watching TV a few years ago when he stumbled across the newly liberated Nelson Mandela greeting thousands of celebrants in Yankee Stadium. "When he said, 'Now you know who I am; I am a Yankee,' I just burst into tears," recalls Demme. "And I thought, 'If this man can elicit that kind of emotion with one line, what if we could spend two hours with him?' " Serendipitously, Demme's friend Jo Menell had a Mandela connection—his brother, Clive, had worked for Mandela after his release from prison in 1990, "and at one point, Clive had the *audacity* to ask Mandela for permission to film his life story," says Demme, with a slight laugh. The result is *Mandela* (opening March 21), a remarkable documentary directed by Jo Menell and produced by Demme in which Nelson Mandela recounts the seminal events of his life. "Mandela gave us his permission with an eye toward the time capsule," says Demme. But punctuating the overwhelming heft of Mandela's life story are little *Real World*-ish vignettes that seem almost paradoxical in their mundanity: Mandela debating with his staff on the merits of a necktie vs. a bow tie for Inauguration Day; in his pajamas, shaving before bed and laying out his clothes for the next day. "This movie lets you laugh at Mandela," says Demme, who was nevertheless floored when he found himself in the same room as South Africa's president. "I was overflowing with gratitude when he *looked* in my direction," Demme recalls of his 30-second encounter. Mandela, unfortunately, will not be able to attend the premiere, which will benefit his Ex-Political Prisoners' Fund. "We expressed to him that perhaps he could tie the benefit in with some other official business, but he won't be there," Demme says. "The man's got a country to run." MAUREEN CALLAHAN

Photograph courtesy of Island Pictures.

evoking the ties that bind. (Denby; 3/3/97) (1 hr. 38 mins.; NR) *Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Private Parts—See David Denby, p. 90. (1 hr. 51 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 34th Street Showplace; Chelsea West; Astor Plaza; Baronet/Coronet; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; New Coliseum; Olympia Theatre; Brooklyn Heights; Pavilion Theatre; Plaza.*

The Quiet Room—A 7-year-old girl (Chloe Ferguson) stops talking when her parents' marriage begins to crumble. Written and directed by Rolf de Heer. (1 hr. 31 mins.; PG). *Opens Friday.*

Return of the Jedi—The final installment of George Lucas's *Star Wars* trilogy. (2 hrs. 13 mins.; PG) *Art Greenwich Twin; Chelsea; Murray Hill Cinemas; Ziegfeld; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square.*

Rhyme & Reason—A documentary about hip-hop featuring Ice-T, Chuck D., and Dr. Dre. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *Village East; Embassy 2–4.*

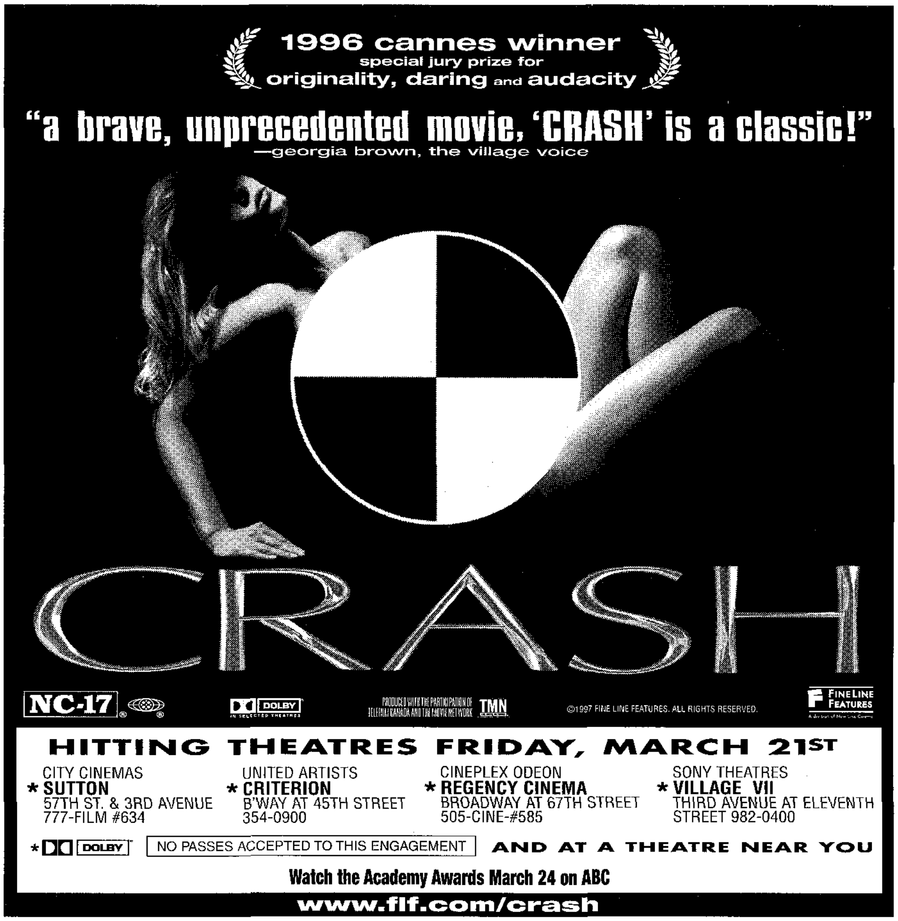
★**Ridicule**—As screenwriter Rémi Waterhouse and director Patrice Leconte tell it, wit rules the court of Louis XVI so thoroughly that a man who says something brilliant at a dinner party or recovers quickly from another man's insult finds himself rewarded with the king's favor. On the other hand, if the same man falls down on the dance floor, or begins an insult that peters out, he receives derision so acute and persistent that he might be required to absent himself from France altogether. What makes the situation even more frightening is that the king himself does not possess wit and sometimes has trouble recognizing it. "It's not a pun, is it?" he asks anxiously after hearing something that pleases him. Wit, as it is conceived here, is artificial, formal, logical. It reveals nothing of character; its very point might be to conceal it. But the director finds these people out; he is more ruthless than the king. (Denby; 12/9/96) (1 hr. 42 mins.; R) *Screening Room; 59th Street East.*

Rosewood—Two men work to evacuate an all-black town when neighboring whites—enraged by false reports of a random attack by a black man against a white woman—seek revenge. Based on actual incidents in twenties Florida. Directed by John Singleton. (2 hrs. 22 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; Chelsea; 72nd St. East; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; Plaza Twin.*

★**Secrets & Lies**—At the center of Mike Leigh's great new comedy is a lovelorn mother with two illegitimate daughters. Cynthia (Brenda Blethyn), past 40, is a desperately sweet white woman who has never received much affection from anyone. She gave away her first daughter, conceived when Cynthia was 15, without looking at her, and has lived in a prison of suspicion with the other, Roxanne. The other wing of Cynthia's family is dominated by her heroically amiable brother, Maurice (Timothy Spall), a large and prosperous man who is one of those rare human beings genuinely pained by egotism and orneriness in other people. Into this noisy glen of magpies steps Cynthia's other daughter, an elegant, accomplished black woman named Hortense (Marianne Jean-Baptiste). Her adoptive parents have died, and despite her success and evident self-possession, she feels lost. Hortense presents herself to Cynthia, and the discomfort and confusion and anguish that follow are a comic harvest without rival in recent movies. (Denby; 9/30/96) (2 hrs. 22 mins.; R) *Quad Cinema; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Selena—Jennifer Lopez stars as the late Tejano singer Selena, who was shot to death by the head of her fan club. (2 hrs. 7 mins.; PG). *Opens Friday.*

Shine—This much-hyped movie is pretty bad, but you should see it anyway for Geoffrey Rush, the Australian theater actor who plays the real-life pianist David Helfgott. As screenwriter Jan Sardi tells it, Helfgott suffered through a cramped, driven childhood in the house of Polish refugees who lost their relatives in the Holocaust. The father (Armin Mueller-Stahl), a bearish domestic tyrant, bullies his talented son into winning competitions, then crushes the boy with guilt when he tries to leave home to continue his career. Bent over from fear, skinny and pale, all glasses and big hands, the teenage boy is so spooked that he collapses smack-bang on the piano as he completes a performance of Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 3. After shock treatment, he winds up in the bin, then makes a long climb back. *Shine* is meant to chronicle the triumph of the human spirit, but it's most-



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ly a crock. (Denby; 12/2/96) (1 hr. 45 mins.; PG-13) *Angelika Film Center; Chelsea; Murray Hill Cinemas; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; Lincoln Square.*

Sling Blade—A mildly retarded young man—who, as a child, slew his mother with a sling blade when he caught her having sex—is released, against his will, from an insane asylum. With John Ritter, Dwight Yoakam, and Billy Bob Thornton, who wrote and directed. (2 hrs. 14 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Chelsea; Carnegie Hall Cinema; 86th Street East; First & 62nd St. Cinema.*

Smilla's Sense of Snow—Julia Ormond stars as an emotionally remote woman who relentlessly investigates the mysterious death of a little boy she had grown to love. With Gabriel Byrne. Directed by Billie August. (2 hrs.; R) *Angelika Film Center; 19th Street East; Beekman; Lincoln Square.*

★**Star Wars**—The early and middle seventies—the time of the *Godfather* movies and great films by Altman, Scorsese, Polanski, and Ashby, the time of De Palma's audacities and a general level of risk-taking, even in the big studios—offered much to anyone eager to believe that film was the great American art form of the twentieth century. Seeing *Star Wars* after those movies was, for some of us, an exhilarating but also unnerving experience. For here was a master showman, George Lucas, working in hyper-pop style. Lucas sent people running up and down corridors, zapping each other with laser guns. At the same time, *Star Wars* had moments of great natural beauty and its own kind of wit. Obviously it was a super entertainment, but it wasn't art, exactly. It was some highly conscious mutation. In the past twenty years, American big-studio films have become so frivolously pop and so omnivorously commercial that *Star Wars* now seems a model of classical narrative. It tells a story with some feeling for its characters; it has a strong charge of suspense and an epic theme—the search of a boy for his father. It has a touch of mystery, and has retrospectively gained in stature by Lucas's extending the mythical aspects of the story in later parts of the trilogy. (Denby; 2/17/97) (2 hrs. 1 min.; PG) *Waverly; Chelsea; National Theatre; Lincoln Square; Pavilion Theatre.*

Unforgotten—A documentary about the controversial Willowbrook facility, which housed the developmentally disabled in horrid conditions. Directed by Jack Fisher. (1 hr. 35 mins.; NR) *Angelika 57.*

Waiting for Guffman—Christopher Guest stars as Corky St. Clair, a failed stage director who returns to his hometown of Blaine, Missouri, in the hopes of resuscitating his career. (1 hr. 33 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center.*

★**When We Were Kings**—In 1974, Don King promoted a world-heavyweight-championship fight in Zaire, the famous "Rumble in the Jungle." For the heavily favored George Foreman, Zaire was just a place to earn $5 million, but for Muhammad Ali, fighting to reclaim the title stripped from him when he refused induction into the Army during the Vietnam War, the event was a defining moment. Blacks had left in shackles and returned as champions—that was his mantra, and the American party included James Brown and B.B. King, who were caught up in the same spirit. The young music documentarian Leon Gast went to Zaire to shoot the performance and returned with 300,000 feet of film. After years of struggle, he finally pulled the footage together with help from producer-director Taylor Hackford, who shot fresh interviews with Norman Mailer and George Plimpton, both of whom covered the fight. We see the routine things onscreen—Foreman punching the training bag, Ali taking body blows fro his sparring partner—which are brought to life by Mailer's comments. Even people who hate boxing will be held by the intensity of the human drama. Watching Muhammad Ali spin and wheel, we can only mourn the brilliant young man who martyred himself to his love of glory in the ring. (Denby; 2/24/97) (1 hr. 32 mins.; NR) *19th Street East; Lincoln Square.*

Manhattan

Below 14th Street

Angelika Film Center—18 W. Houston St. (995-2000) *The Daytrippers; Breaking the Waves; Shine; Sling Blade; Smilla's Sense of Snow; Waiting for Guffman.*

Art Greenwich Twin—Greenwich Ave. at 12th St. (505-CINE#616) *Return of the Jedi.*

Cinema Village 12th St—22 E. 12th St. (924-3363) *Boyfriends.* Opening 3/21: *Mandela.*

Film Forum—209 W. Houston St. (727-8110) *Gray's Anatomy; Le Samourai; Watermelon Woman.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Quad Cinema—34 W. 13th St. (255-8800) *Boys Life 2; Drunks; Secrets & Lies; The Substance of Fire.*

Opening
The Silent Treatment

In *The Quiet Room,* Chloe Ferguson (above) is a seven-year-old girl so distraught by her parents' fractured marriage that she stops talking altogether. Rolf de Heer's gentle portrait of childhood trauma, which had its premiere at last year's Cannes Film Festival, opens March 21.

Screening Room—54 Varick St. (below Canal) (334-2100) *Everyone Says I Love You; Ridicule.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Village East—189 Second Ave., at 12th St. (529-6799) *City of Industry; Donnie Brasco; The Empire Strikes Back; The English Patient; Jungle 2 Jungle; Kolya; Marvin's Room; Rhyme & Reason.*

Village Theatre VII—66 Third Ave., at 11th St. (982-0400) *Absolute Power; Booty Call; Lost Highway; Love Jones; Private Parts; Rosewood.*

Waverly—323 Sixth Ave., at W. 3rd St. (505-CINE#603) *Gentlemen Don't Eat Poets; Jerry Maguire; Star Wars.*

14th–41st Streets

19th Street East—890 Broadway, at 19th St. (260-8000) *Donnie Brasco; Jerry Maguire; Jungle 2 Jungle; Love Jones; Smilla's Sense of Snow; When We Were Kings.*

34th Street East—241 E. 34th St. (505-CINE#586) *Lost Highway.*

34th Street Showplace—238 E. 34th St. (532-5544) *Private Parts; The Empire Strikes Back.*

Chelsea—260 W. 23rd St. (505-CINE#597) *Booty Call; The Empire Strikes Back; The English Patient; Return of the Jedi; Rosewood; Shine; Sling Blade; Star Wars.*

Chelsea West—333 W. 23rd St. (505-CINE#614) *Private Parts.*

Murray Hill Cinemas—160 E. 34th St. (689-6548) *Absolute Power; Donnie Brasco; The English Patient; Return of the Jedi; Shine.*

42nd–60th Streets

59th Street East—239 E. 59th St. (505-CINE#615) *Ridicule.*

Angelika 57—225 W. 57th St. (586-1900) *La Cérémonie; Unforgotten.* Opening 3/21: *Mandela.*

Astor Plaza—44th St. bet. Broadway. and Eighth Ave. (869-8340) *Private Parts.*

Baronet/Coronet—993 Third Ave., bet. 59th and 60th Sts. (505-CINE#608) *Private Parts.*

Carnegie Hall Cinema—887 Seventh Ave., bet. 56th and 57th Sts. (505-CINE#593) *Sling Blade.*

Cinema 3—2 W. 59th St. (505-CINE#596) *Big Night.*

Cinema I, II, Third Ave.—1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (753-6022) *Jungle 2 Jungle; Shine.*

Criterion Center—1514 Broadway, bet. 44th and 45th Sts. (354-0900) *Absolute Power; Booty Call; Donnie Brasco; Jerry Maguire; Love Jones.*

Crown Gotham—969 Third Ave., bet. 57th and 58th Sts. (759-2262) *The Empire Strikes Back.*

Eastside Playhouse—919 Third Ave., bet. 55th and 56th Sts. (755-3020) *Breaking the Waves.*

Embassy 1—1560 Broadway, bet. 46th and 47th Sts. (302-0494) *City of Industry.*

Embassy 2–4—701 Seventh Ave., bet. 47th and 48th Sts. (730-7262) *The English Patient; Jungle 2 Jungle; Rhyme & Reason.*

Guild 50th Street—33 W. 50th St. (757-2406) *Marvin's Room.*

Manhattan Twin—220 E. 59th St. (505-CINE#590) *City of Industry; Love Jones.*

National Theatre—1500 Broadway, bet. 43rd and 44th Sts. (505-CINE#589) *The Empire Strikes Back; Star Wars.*

Paris Theater—4 W. 58th St. (980-5656) *Hamlet.*

State—1540 Broadway (391-2900) *Everyone Says I Love You; Fools Rush In; Rosewood; Scream.*

Sutton—205 E. 57th St. (759-1411) *Fools Rush In; Evita.*

Worldwide Cinemas—340 W. 50th St. (505-CINE#610) *The Crucible; Daylight; Fargo; Fierce Creatures; My Fellow Americans; The Evening Star.*

Ziegfeld—141 W. 54th St. (505-CINE#602) *Return of the Jedi.*

61st Street and Above, East Side

68th Street Playhouse—1164 Third Ave., at 68th St. (734-0302) *Kolya.*

72nd St. East—1230 Third Ave., bet. 71st and 72nd Sts. (879-1313) *Rosewood.*

86th Street—125 E. 86th St. (505-CINE#604) *The Empire Strikes Back; The English Patient.*

86th Street East—210 E. 86th St. (249-1144) *Sling Blade; Jungle 2 Jungle.*

Festival

Reel Genius

The annual excitement that is "New Directors/New Films" gets under way this Friday at MOMA. *This year's provocateur: writer-director Neil Labute, whose 'In the Company of Men'—about two guys (Aaron Eckhart and Matt Malloy, above) who simultaneously court a lonely deaf woman, with every intention of using her up and kicking her to the curb—is hateful, misogynistic, and thoroughly compelling. (See "Museums, Societies, Etc." for info.)*

Beekman—1254 Second Ave., bet. 65th and 66th Sts. (505-CINE#606) *Smilla's Sense of Snow.*

First & 62nd St. Cinema—400 E. 62nd St. (505-CINE#957) *Dante's Peak; Lost Highway; Marvin's Room; Return of the Jedi; Secrets & Lies; Sling Blade.*

Gemini—1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (832-1670) *Absolute Power; Donnie Brasco; Jerry Maguire.*

New York Twin—1271 Second Ave., bet. 66th and 67th Sts. (744-7339) *Everyone Says I Love You; The English Patient.*

Orpheum 7—1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (876-2400) *Absolute Power; Booty Call; Love Jones; Private Parts; Return of the Jedi; Rosewood.*

UA East—1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (249-5100) *Donnie Brasco.*

61st Street and Above, West Side

62nd and Broadway—1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (505-CINE#864) *The Substance of Fire.*

84th Street—2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (294-9410) *Booty Call; City of Industry; The Empire Strikes Back; Love Jones; Private Parts.*

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas—30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway bet. 62nd and 63rd Sts. (757-2280) *The Daytrippers; The Eighth Day; The English Patient; Kolya; Prisoner of the Mountains; Secrets & Lies.*

Lincoln Square—1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (336-5000) *Absolute Power; Donnie Brasco; Jerry Maguire; Jungle 2 Jungle; Kama Sutra; Lost Highway; Return of the Jedi; Rosewood; Shine; Smilla's Sense of Snow; Star Wars; When We Were Kings.*

Metro Cinema—2626 Broadway, bet. 99th and 100th Sts. (505-CINE#609) *Absolute Power; Jungle 2 Jungle.*

New Coliseum—701 W. 181st St. (740-1545) *Booty Call; Jungle 2 Jungle; Love Jones; Private Parts.*

Nova—3589 Broadway, bet. 147th and 148th Sts. (862-5728) *Booty Call; Jungle 2 Jungle; Love Jones.*

Olympia Theatre—2770 Broadway, bet. 106th and 107th Sts. (505-CINE#613) *Booty Call; Private Parts.*

Regency—1987 Broadway, bet. 67th and 68th Sts. (505-CINE#585) *Marvin's Room.*

Bronx

Area Code 718

Bay Plaza—2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (320-3020) *Absolute Power; Booty Call; Dante's Peak; Donnie Brasco; The Empire Strikes Back; Jerry Maguire; Jungle 2 Jungle; Love Jones; Private Parts; Return of the Jedi; Rosewood.*

Concourse Plaza—214 E. 161th St. (588-8800) *Booty Call; Dante's Peak; Donnie Brasco; Jungle 2 Jungle; Love Jones; The Pest; Private Parts; Return of the Jedi; Rhyme & Reason; Rosewood; That Darn Cat.*

Riverdale Twin Theatre—5683 Riverdale Ave., at 259th St. (884-9514) *Donnie Brasco; Private Parts.*

Whitestone—2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy. (409-9037) *Absolute Power; Booty Call; City of Industry; Donnie Brasco; The Empire Strikes Back; Fools Rush In; Jungle 2 Jungle; Love Jones; Private Parts; Return of the Jedi; Rhyme & Reason; Rosewood; That Darn Cat.*

Brooklyn

Area Code 718

Alpine—6817 Fifth Ave., at 69th St. (777-FILM#580) *Absolute Power; City of Industry; Dante's Peak; The English Patient; Jungle 2 Jungle; Marvin's Room; Private Parts.*

Brooklyn Heights—70 Henry St. (596-7070) *The Empire Strikes Back; Private Parts.*

Canarsie—9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (251-0700) *Booty Call; Jungle 2 Jungle; Private Parts.*

Cobble Hill—265 Court St. (596-9113) *Absolute Power; Donnie Brasco; Jungle 2 Jungle; Marvin's Room; Shine; Sling Blade.*

Fortway—6720 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy., at 68th St. (777-FILM#578) *Booty Call; Donnie Brasco; The Empire Strikes Back; Fools Rush In; Love Jones; Return of the Jedi.*

Kenmore—Church Ave. nr. Flatbush Ave. (777-FILM#576) *Booty Call; Love Jones; Private Parts; Rhyme & Reason.*

Photograph courtesy of the Film Society of Lincoln Center.

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Kent Triplex—Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (338-3371) *Jungle 2 Jungle; Love Jones; Private Parts.*

Kings Plaza—5201 Kings Plaza; Flatbush Ave. at Ave. U (777-FILM#579) *Booty Call; Jungle 2 Jungle; Love Jones; Rhyme & Reason; Rosewood.*

Kingsway—946 Kings Hwy. at Coney Island Ave. (777-FILM#577) *Donnie Brasco; The Empire Strikes Back; Private Parts; Return of the Jedi.*

Marboro—6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (232-4000) *Donnie Brasco; The Empire Strikes Back; Marvin's Room; Private Parts.*

Pavilion Theatre—188 Prospect Park West, Brooklyn (369-0838) *The Empire Strikes Back; Jungle 2 Jungle; Marvin's Room; Private Parts; Star Wars.*

Plaza Twin—314 Flatbush Ave., nr. Eighth Ave. (636-0170) *Booty Call; Love Jones; Rosewood.*

Ridgewood—55-27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (821-5993) *Booty Call; City of Industry; Jungle 2 Jungle; Love Jones; Rhyme & Reason.*

The Movies at Sheepshead Bay—3907 Shore Pkwy, off Exit 9 at Belt Pkwy. (615-1700) *Absolute Power; Donnie Brasco; The Empire Strikes Back; Jungle 2 Jungle; Love Jones; Private Parts; Return of the Jedi; Rosewood; Shine.*

Queens

Area Code 718

Astoria—28-60 Steinway St. (726-1279) *Absolute Power; Booty Call; The Empire Strikes Back; Fools Rush In; Love Jones; Private Parts; Star Wars.*

Bay Terrace—211-01 26th Ave. and Bell Blvd., Bayside (428-4040) *The English Patient; Jungle 2 Jungle; Kolya; Lost Highway; Marvin's Room; Sling Blade; Star Wars.*

Cinema City—183-15 Horace Harding Expy., at 183rd St., Fresh Meadows (777-FILM#592) *Booty Call; Donnie Brasco; Jungle 2 Jungle; Love Jones; Star Wars.*

Cinemart—106-03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (261-2244) *Jungle 2 Jungle; Private Parts.*

Continental—70-20 Austin St., Forest Hills (544-1020) *The Empire Strikes Back; Fools Rush In; Smilla's Sense of Snow.*

Crossbay—94-11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (848-1738) *Booty Call; Love Jones; Rhyme & Reason; Rosewood.*

Crossbay II—92-10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (641-5330) *City of Industry; Donnie Brasco; The Empire Strikes Back; Jungle 2 Jungle; Private Parts; Return of the Jedi.*

Elmwood—57-02 Hoffman Dr., Elmhurst (429-4770) *Booty Call; Jungle 2 Jungle; Love Jones; Private Parts.*

Forest Hills—107-16 Continental Ave., at Queens Blvd. (261-7866) *Absolute Power; Rosewood; Sling Blade.*

Fresh Meadows—Eastbound Service Road, at 190th St. (777-FILM#619) *Absolute Power; The Empire Strikes Back; Jerry Maguire; Marvin's Room; Private Parts; Return of the Jedi.*

Jackson Triplex—82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (478-6777) *Booty Call; Donnie Brasco; Love Jones.*

Midway—108-22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (261-8572) *City of Industry; The Empire Strikes Back; Jerry Maguire; Star Wars.*

Movieworld—242-02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (423-7200) *Absolute Power; Donnie Brasco; The Empire Strikes Back; Jerry Maguire; Jungle 2 Jungle; Private Parts; Return of the Jedi; Star Wars.*

North Shore Towers—27-10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (229-7702) *Absolute Power; Shine.*

Plaza —103-14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (639-0012) *Private Parts; Jungle 2 Jungle.*

Quartet—160-06 Northern Blvd., at 160th St., Flushing (359-6777) *Absolute Power; Booty Call; City of Industry; Fools Rush In; Love Jones.*

The Movies at Bayside—38-39 Bell Blvd., at 39th Ave. (225-7711) *Donnie Brasco; The Empire Strikes Back; Private Parts; Return of the Jedi.*

Trylon—98-81 Queens Blvd., at 66th Ave., Rego Park (459-8944) *Donnie Brasco.*

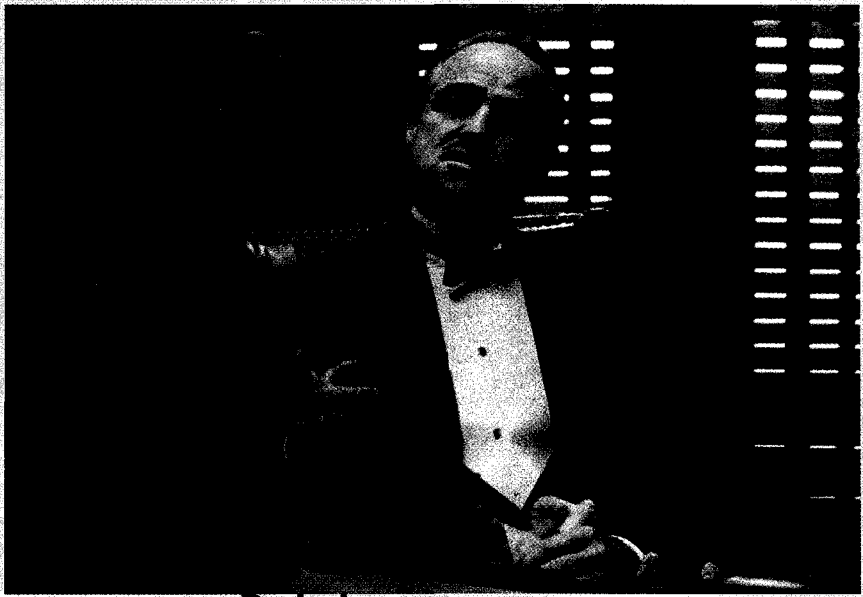
Staten Island

Area Code 718

Atrium—680 Arthur Kill Road, nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (317-8300) *City of Industry; Donnie Brasco; Jungle 2 Jungle; Private Parts; Secrets & Lies; Shine.*

Hylan Plaza—107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (351-0805) *Donnie Brasco; The Empire Strikes Back; Jungle 2 Jungle; Marvin's Room; Private Parts.*

The Movies at Staten Island—141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (983-9600) *Booty Call; City of Industry; Dante's Peak; Donnie Brasco; The Empire Strikes Back; Fools Rush In; Jungle 2 Jungle; Love Jones; Private Parts; Return of the Jedi; Sling Blade; Star Wars.*



Revival

Family Reunion

In celebration of its twenty-fifth anniversary, 'The Godfather'—the mother of all Mafia movies—returns to the big screen. Francis Ford Coppola's gorgeous, intricate study of family business and betrayal falls off the truck and into your local cineplex this Friday.

Museums, Societies, Etc.

A Different Light—3/23: *Cabaret* (1972). 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850); free.

American Museum of the Moving Image—"Chantal Akerman." 3/22: *A Couch in New York* (1996), *American Stories/Food, Family, and Philosophy* (1989), and *Franz Schubert's Last Three Sonatas* (1989). "Second Look." 3/23: *Robert Altman's Jazz '34: Remembrances of Kansas City Swing* (1996) and *Kansas City* (1996). 3601 36th St., Astoria, Queens (entrance on 35th Ave.; 718-784-0077); $8.

Anthology Film Archives—3/17: "White Light/White Heat." 3/17-3/18 and 3/21-3/23: Jim Jarmusch's *Dead Man* (1995). "Luis Buñuel." 3/17: *The Young and the Damned* (1950) and *Land Without Bread* (1932). 3/18: *The Great Madcap* (1949) and *The Brute* (1952). 3/19: *Mexican Bus Ride* (1951). 3/21-3/23: *The Exterminating Angel* (1962) and *Viridiana* (1961). "Mike Leigh." 3/18: *Four Days in July* (1985). 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5181); $7.

Casa La Femme—3/23: *Law of Desire* (1987). 150 Wooster St. (505-0005).

Donnell Media Center—3/17: *The Secret of Roan Inish* (1994). 3/19: *A Slave of Love* (1976). 3/20: *Seepage* (1981) and *James and the Giant Peach* (1996). 20 W. 53rd St. (621-0619); free.

Film Forum—"Screen Deco." 3/18: *Five and Ten* (1931) and *Faithless* (1932). 3/19: *Artists and Models Abroad* (1938) and *Transatlantic Merry-Go-Round* (1934). 3/20: *Things to Come* (1936) and *Reaching for the Moon* (1930). 3/21 and 3/22: *Skyscraper Souls* (1932) and *Under 18* (1932). 3/23 and 3/24: *Metropolis* (1926) and *Madam Satan* (1930). 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110); $8.

Film Society of Lincoln Center—(The Walter Reade Theater)—"Rendezvous with French Cinema Today." 3/18: *Encore* (1996) and *Marianne* (1996). 3/18 and 3/20: *The Age of Possibilities* (1995). 3/20: *Ponette* (1996). 3/20 and 3/22: *Just for Laughs* (1996). 3/21 and 3/22: *Fallait Pas!* (1996). 3/21 and 3/23: *Parfait Amour!* (1996). 3/22: *Pedale Douce* (1996). 3/23: *Bernie* (1996) and *Portraits Chinois* (1996). 65 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600); $8.

French Institute—3/18: *Vietnam: A Celebration* (1993). 3/20: *Like a Bride* (1993). 3/25: *Microcosmos* (1996). Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160); $7, seniors, $5.50.

Japan Society—"Art on Film." 3/18: *Kyoto* (1968) and Echizen Washi (1990). 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015); $7.50.

Museum of Modern Art—"From the Archives: Best Picture." 3/17 and 3/18: *Unforgiven* (1992). 3/17 and 3/20: *All the Kings Men* (1949). 3/18 and 3/20: *Platoon* (1986). 3/20: *Nora Helmer* (1973) and *Women in New York* (1977). "New Directors/New Films." 3/21 and 3/22: *When the Cat's Away* (1996), *Love Serenade* (1996), and *Pact* (1996). 3/22 and 3/23: *Chronicle of a Disappearance* (1996) and *The Apartment* (1996). 3/23 and 3/25: *The Eighteenth* (1996), *Little Angel* (1996), and *Snake Feed* (1996). Call for program info. 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480); $8.

New York Film Academy—3/19-3/23: "Fourth Annual New York Underground Film Festival." Call for program info. 100 E. 17th St. (744-5554).

Performing Arts Library—"Lillian Gish." 3/20: Julie Harris and Barnard Hughes read correspondence from Eugene O'Neill and will perform. 40 Lincoln Center Plaza (870-1630); free.

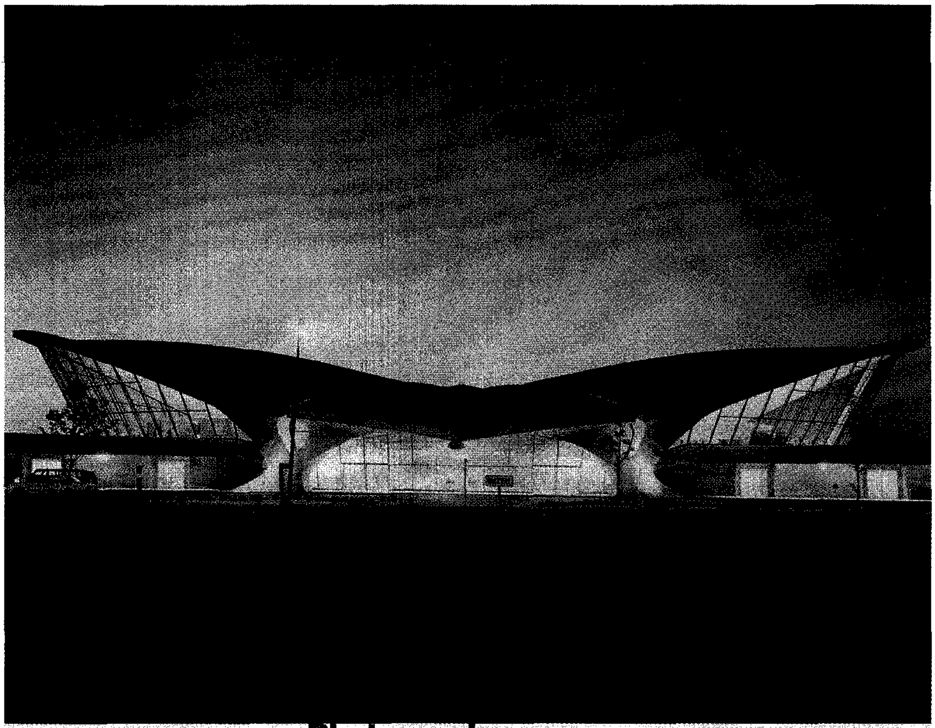
Screening Room—Sunday brunch: *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1953). 54 Varick St., below Canal (334-2100) $8 ($5 for brunch patrons).

Symphony Space—3/18: *On the Town* (1949). 2537 Broadway (864-5400); $8.

Photograph by Photofest.

art

Ezra Stoller...Cildo Meireles



Photography
Site Specific

Trained as an architect, Ezra Stoller took up architectural photography in 1939 and went on to become the field's acknowledged master. While his flawlessly composed photographs are intended to reveal, as Stoller himself says, the "idea" of a building, his views of such modernist icons as Eero Saarinen's TWA Terminal (above, at what's now JFK airport) often are unexpectedly romantic. At James Danziger Gallery, 130 Prince Street; through April 12.

Openings

Dealers of Asian art and antiquities from America, Europe, and the Far East have booths at the second annual **Asian Art Fair,** at the Seventh Regiment Armory, Park Avenue at 67th Street, March 22–26. Hours are 11–8 on Saturday, Monday, and Tuesday, 11–7 on Sunday and Wednesday; admission is $15. For further information, call 642-8572.

Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

John James Audubon—Sixty hand-colored engravings from the first edition of the artist's *The Bird of America*, completed in June 1838; through 4/26. Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St. (535-8810).

Herbert Ferber—Calligraphic paintings from 1958 to 1965 by this artist (1906–1991) who is better known for his sculpture; through 4/5. Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (794-0550).

Janet Gillespie/Steve Greene—Intimately scaled paintings that depict catastrophes at sea/Paintings of old, worn-out trucks, tires, and motors. Through 4/14. Baumgold, 128 E. 72nd St. (861-7338).

John Moore—Recent paintings, each of which melds together views of at least two cities; through 4/26. Hirschl & Adler Modern, 21 E. 70th St. (535-8810).

Niki de Saint Phalle—Prints, drawings, and sculptural reliefs from the sixties to the present; through 4/19. Rickards, 1045 Madison Ave. (924-0858).

Andy Warhol and Jean-Michel Basquiat—Large collaborative paintings dating from 1984–85; through 4/26. Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave. (744-2313).

57th Street Area

Larry Bell—New drawings from the series *100 Fractions*; through 4/5. McGrath, 20 W. 57th St. (956-3366).

Alan Davie—A survey of paintings covering the years 1956 to 1996 by this Scottish-born artist whose biomorphic creatures and and hieroglyphs draw on prehistoric, African, Hopi, Tantric, and Jain cosmographic imagery; through 4/5. ACA, 41 E. 57th St. (644-8300).

Philippe Favier—Paintings on glass from the series *Suite 668* that incorporate collage and reflect the French artist's study of Surrealism and Dada; through 4/5. Helman, 20 W. 57th St. (245-2888).

Bryan Hunt—New bronze and aluminum sculptures cast from the artist's sculptures based on the forms of rivers and lakes; through 4/19. Boone, 745 Fifth Ave. (752-2929).

Bill Jacklin—Paintings on works on paper by the British-American artist that depict quotidian scenes of New York City; through 4/5. Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. (541-4900).

Cildo Meireles—Two installations by the Brazilian conceptual artist: *Eureka Blindhotland,* an environment of floor sculptures contained by lightweight black netting and first produced in 1970, and *Fio,* a new work consisting of numerous bales of straw contained by 300 feet of 18-karat-gold thread; through 4/12. Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. (315-0470).

Alice Neel—A survey of the artist's paintings from the thirties; through 4/12. Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (980-5454).

Richard Stankiewicz—Figurative and abstract sculptures from the fifties; through 5/3. Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. (752-1223).

Louis Comfort Tiffany—A selection of glass vessels, many of which came from the artist's estate, Laurelton Hall at Cold Spring Harbor, which was gutted by fire in 1957; through 4/5. McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. (319-1996).

Beatrice Wood—New lustered vessels by this artist whose retrospective is currently on view at the American Craft Museum through June 8 (see Museum Listings); through 4/5. Clark, 24 W. 57th St. (246-2205).

Mark Workman—Pennsylvania landscapes in acrylic on paper; Through 4/12. Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St. (759-2345).

SoHo and TriBeCa

L.C. Armstrong/Emily Cheng—New paintings that feature the artist's signature paint-and-burn line under polyester resin surfaces/Photographic portraits exploring the relationship between painting and photography; Through 4/19. Bravin Post Lee, 80 Mercer St. (966-2676).

Ron Baron—Totemic sculptures of stacked found objects; through 4/12. Kustera, 41 Wooster St. (965-1527).

Bill Beckley—Photographic tableaux from the nineties; through 4/5. Gibson, 568 Broadway (925-1192).

Miguel Calderón—New works that draw on the artist's background in film and photography;

Ground Rules:

Galleries are generally open Tues. through Sat., from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6.

Photograph courtesy of the James Danziger Gallery.

Through 4/19. Rosen, 130 Prince St. (941-0203).

Francis Cape—A large-scale wall sculpture and drawings; through 4/5. Martz, 580 Broadway (334-3348).

Janet Cohen—Drawings that depict counting systems derived from baseball, specifically from estimates of pitch locations; through 4/14. Kramarsky, 560 Broadway (966-6601).

Richard Cramer—Paintings whose vivid colors and cartoonish figures were inspired by the Lower East Side street scene; through 4/5. Space 504, 670 Broadway (473-0505).

Enzo Cucchi—Recent fresco paintings; through 4/19. Shafrazi, 119 Wooster St. (274-9300).

Jes Fomsgaard—Images of architectural constructions, human forms, and friezes in plaster, chalk, pencil, and ink on painted wood; through 4/5. DCA, 420 W. Broadway (334-3331).

Robert Franca—Ceramic reliefs and gouaches; through 3/31. Conde, 588 Broadway (274-0438).

Yoshishige Furukawa—Paintings of geometric shapes on textured backgrounds; through 4/5. Condeso/Lawler, 524 Broadway (219-1283).

Mark Greenwold—Paintings from the past three years that depict the artist and his friends and family in bizarre imaginary narratives; through 4/15. Kind, 136 Greene St. (925-1200).

Callum Inness—Recent abstract paintings by a Scottish artist that explore the properties of paint; through 4/5. Kelly, 43 Mercer St. (343-2405).

Robin Kahn—Paintings and sculpture on the theme of reading; through 4/12. Inglett, 100 Wooster St. (343-0573).

Matvey Levenstein—New paintings based on photographs from a found anonymous album of an upper-middle-class Czech family; through 4/12. Tilton, 49 Greene St. (941-1775).

Renée Levi—Sculptures created from flattened cardboard boxes and shopping bags that are glued or taped together and painted; through 4/12. Swiss Institute, 495 Broadway (925-2035).

Ellen Levin—An installation that uses dolls, crows, knives, and other objects and materials to explore subconscious fantasies; through 4/26. Fao, 558 Broome St. (334-8125), Wed. and Thurs. 2–6, Fri. and Sat. 12–6.

Ruben Torres Llorca—Assemblages that incorporate images of folk art, religious symbols, and popular kitsch; through 4/5. Goldstein, 39 Wooster St. (431-0314).

Bernard Maisner/Sermin Kardestuncer—New paintings/Works that use sewing to explore the effects of repetitive action;Through 4/12. Cavin-Morris, 560 Broadway (226-3768).

Karl Mann—Assemblages of found objects; through 4/12. Ricco/Maresca, 152 Wooster St. (780-0071).

Jill Nathanson—New abstract paintings that reflect the artist's involvement in mysticism and meditation; through 4/2. Kelly, 591 Broadway (226-1660).

Joe Nicastri—Objects and paintings that are the artist's meditation on the plight of Holocaust victims; through 4/10. Fotouhi Cramer, 560 Broadway (431-1304).

Frank Owen—Recent paintings that refer to nature; through 4/9. Hoffman, 429 W. Broadway (966-6676).

Yigal Ozeri—Paintings of unrealized architecture; through 4/13. Z, 70 Greene St. (966-8836).

Roxy Paine—Five new sculptural works that explore the idea of potentiality through the use of organic and nonorganic materials; through 4/26. Feldman, 31 Mercer St. (226-3232).

Elizabeth Payton—Recent portraits; though 4/12. Enterprise, 558 Broome St. (662-1693), Wed.–Sat. 12–7.

Nancy Rubins—Two new monumentally scaled sculptures of amassed airplane parts; through 4/5. Kasmin, 74 Grand St. (219-3219).

William Scarborough—Collages and prints from 1992 to the present; through 4/6. Gold, 474 Broadway (941-4641).

Nancy Shaver—Sculptures that incorporate blocks of *common lumber, gauzy fabrics, and paint*; through 4/26. Marcus, 578 Broadway (226-3200).

Michael Smith and Joshua White—A large-scale collaborative installation titled *Musco* that is a lifelike re-creation of a fictional showroom of a lighting business of the same name; through 4/5. Wittels, 48 Greene St. (219-2211).

Frank Stella—New sculpture; through 4/26. Gagosian, 136 Wooster St. (228-2828).

John R. Thompson—Paintings on spandex that incorporate oil, enamel, contact paper, and jade glue; through 4/19. Ross, 568 Broadway (343-2161).

Selina Trieff/Stephen Dietemann—Paintings of figures in dreamlike narratives, dressed in masks and costumes/Landscape paintings. Through 4/2. Perlow, 560 Broadway (941-1220).

Chelsea

Jean-Marc Bustamante—New sculpture; through 4/19. Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. (243-0200).

Fernando Canovas—New geometric paintings by the Argentinian artist that incorporate constructions of clay ampules; through 4/3. Nosei, 530 W. 22nd St. (741-8695).

Sherman Drexler—Paintings that pay homage to prehistoric cave painters; through 3/29. Gang, 535 W. 20th St.

Maxine Henryson and Hunter Reynolds—A collaborative project titled *I-DEA: The Goddess Within* that is an ongoing photographic diary of the performances of the mysterious Patina du Prey, photographed by Henryson, a New York–based photographer, and enacted by Reynolds, a Berlin-based performance artist; through 4/13. Kirkland, 504 W. 22nd St. (627-3930).

Ilya Kabakov—An installation that transforms the gallery into a provincial Soviet museum dedicated to the common household fly; through 4/5. Gladstone, 515 W. 24th St. (206-9300).

Robin Tewes—Intimately scaled portraits of nude women and children in various psychological states; through 3/30. Maynes, 529 W. 20th St. (741-3318).

Lincoln Tobier—A series of works that take the form of illegal radio transmissions, and studies for a model of Los Angeles that would be made in collaboration with the city's residents; through 4/6. Hearn, 530 W. 22nd St. (727-7366).

Other

Krystyna Borkowska/Carol Kreeger Davidson—Paintings built up with layers of acrylic and precious metals/Sculptures of folded aluminum that suggest human figures. Through 4/4. Humphrey, 250 E. 51st St. (317-9757).

Louisa Matthiasdottir—A survey of the artist's paintings from the thirties to the present, including portraits, still lifes, and landscapes of her native Iceland; through 4/19. New York Studio School of Drawing, Painting, and Sculpture, 8 W. 8th St. (673-6466), Mon.–Sat. 10–6.

Dianora Niccolini/Steven Meier—Black-and-white photographs of male and female nudes/Geometric abstract paintings. Through 4/27. Curcio/Spector, 304 E. 5th St. (505-0409).

Liz Whitney Quisgard—Paintings of Byzantine architecture based on photographs the artist has taken on her travels in Morocco and Turkey; through 4/1. Fordham University, Entrance Gallery, Columbus Ave. at 60th St.

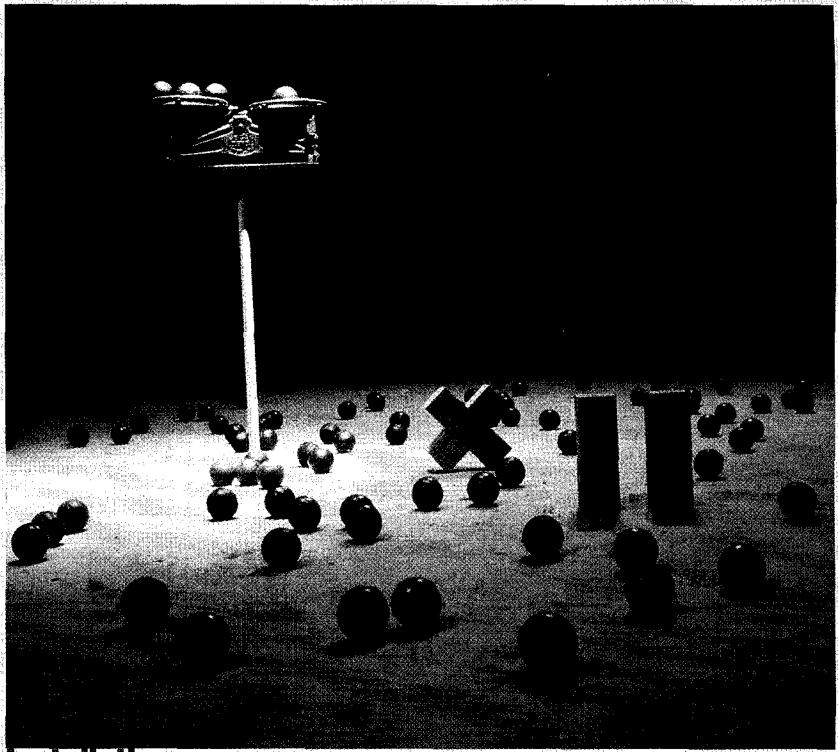
Sidney Tillim—New paintings and drawings; through 4/6. Trans Hudson, 416 W. 13th St. (242-3232), Wed.–Sun. 12–6.

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Graham—1014 Madison Ave. (535-5767). Works using landscapes to explore formalist issues of light, color, and gesture; through 4/5.

Sculpture Center—167 E. 69th St. (879-3500). Works inspired by Americas' indigenous cultures, with works by Becerra, Hardinger, Miller, and Masayesva; through 4/1.



Installation **The Brazilian conceptual artist Cildo Meireles has described the poetically titled *Eureka/Blindhotland*, first produced in 1970, as the nucleus for all his later work. Entering an environment of black netting, a viewer walks among spheres of different sizes, hears a soundtrack of balls dropping from varying heights, and experiences a state of exaggerated sensory perception. At Galerie Lelong, 20 West 57th Street; through April 12.**

Photograph courtesy of Galerie Lelong.

Ubu—16 E. 78th St. (794-4444). Surreal, sexually explicit collages by the avant-garde Czech artist Jindrich Styrsky (1899-1942) from the book *Emile Comes to Me in a Dream*; erotic photographs and collages dating from 1929–1948 by Bellmer, Brzeski, Hugnet, and Racz; through 5/3.

57th Street Area

Fischbach—24 W. 57th St. (757-0202). Still lifes by Fish, Freckelton, Hagin, and Shorr; through 4/12.

M B Modern—41 E. 57th St. (371-3444). Works by Aronson, Cox, and Lebrun; through 4/20.

Paine Webber—1285 Ave. of the Americas (713-2885). "The Gardens of Ellen Biddle Shipman, 1869–1950," an exhibition of drawings, photographs, and plans chronicling the career of this renowned American gardener; through 4/4.

Snyder—20 W. 57th St. (262-1160). Works by expatriates living in Paris in the twenties and thirties, including works by Alexander Calder, Man Ray, Frank Stella, others; through 5/17.

SoHo and TriBeCa

Feature Inc.—76 Greene St. (941-7077). Works by Beck, Linn, and Wurtz; through 4/5.

Harris—383 W. Broadway (431-3600). Five one-person shows, with works by Baeder, Jensz, Manley, others; through 4/29.

Harris—524 Broadway (941-9895). Abstract paintings by Acheson, Fishman, and Schiowitz; 3/20–4/19.

Lombard/Freid—470 Broome St. (334-5060). "Narrative Usage," with works by Burgin, Koester, Roberts, others; through 4/12.

Maupin—39 Greene St. (965-0753). Works using mirrors, including works by Fernandez, Graham, Jaar, others; 3/22–4/26.

Nolan/Eckman—560 Broadway (925-6190). Self-portraits by Baselitz, Smith, Westerman, others; through 4/26.

Chelsea

Cheim & Read—521 W. 23rd St. (242-7727). Installations by Bourgeois, Holzer, and Neel; through 4/5.

Metro Pictures—519 W. 24th St. (206-7100). Paintings by Dunham and Miller, sculpture by Kelley, and early photographs by Simmons; through 4/26.

Other

Baruch College—135 E. 22nd St. (387-1006). "Women and Abstract Expressionism in the 1950s," with works by Krasner, Mitchell, and Parsons; 3/21–4/17.

School of Visual Arts—209 E. 23rd St. (592-2144). The world's most memorable posters; through 4/29.

Photography

Alexander—59 Wooster St. (925-4338). Photo-based works by Acconci, Burden, Rauschenberg, others; through 4/29.

Manuel Alvarez Bravo/Colette Alvarez Urbajtel—An exhibition marking the artist's ninety-fifth birthday. Color photographs taken in Mexico, New Guinea, China, France, and elsewhere. Through 5/3. Witkin, 415 West Broadway (925-5510).

Lois Conner—Recent photographs of the Navajo people; through 4/19. Miller, 138 Spring St. (226-1220).

William Eggleston—Two portfolios of photographs that were taken in the seventies and recently printed under Eggelston's supervision by the master printer Nino Mondhe; through 4/12. Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (980-5454).

Saul Fletcher—Photography by this British photographer; through 4/5. Kern, 558 Broadway (965-1706).

James A. Fox—Photographs of boxers; through 4/12. Yoshii, 20 W. 57th St. (265-8876).

Gearhart—252 Mott St. (966-3556). Photographs of the Wooster Group theater ensemble, with portraits of members Willem Dafoe, Peyton Smith, Kate Valk, others; through 4/30.

John Goodman—Photographs of the Times Square boxer's gym, which was recently closed due to the Times Square renovation project; through 4/10. SABA, 116 E. 16th St. (477-7722).

Great Modern Pictures—48 E. 82nd St. (242-2581). "Beats and Hipsters," photographs from the fifties; through 4/20.

Donald Greenhaus—Photographs from the sixties through the nineties; through 4/29. 479 Gallery, 594 Broadway (334-0909).

Hart—457 Broome St. (226-2761). Photographs by Baker, Barnard, Bedford, others; 3/20–4/26.

Matthias Herrmann—Self-portraits; through 4/13. Wessel + O'Connor, 242 W. 26th St. (242-881).

ICP—"David Levinthal 1975–1996." A retrospective of photographs that pit reality against artifice, including images of toy soldiers reenacting World War II and black memorabilia; through 3/21. 1130 Fifth Ave. (860-1777); Tues. 11–8 (6–8 voluntary contribution), Wed.–Sun. 11–6; $4; $2.50 seniors and students.

Michael Kenna—Photographs of French gardens, windmills, and landscapes; through 4/26. Mann, 42 E. 76th St. (570-1223).

Saul Leiter—Color photographs from the fifties, and painted photographs from the seventies to the present; through 4/5. Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. (334-0010).

Esko Männikkö—Recent color photographs of southern Texas and the people who live there; through 3/30. Morris Healy, 530 W. 22nd St. (243-3753).

Andrea Modica—Photographs of children and their surroundings; through 4/19. Friedman, 851 Madison Ave. (628-5300).

Morthland—225 Tenth Ave. (242-7767). Contemporary photograms of scientific books and celestial occurrences by Rossiter, plus vintage photographs of scientific explorations; through 4/13.

Andrea Robbins/Max Becher—Photographs of Dachau; through 4/5. Basilico, 26 Wooster St. (966-1831).

David Seltzer—Large-scale photographs by this New York artist, most dealing with his relationships; through 3/29. Richardson, 560 Broadway (343-1255).

Andres Serrano—A new series of works, entitled "A History of Sex"; through 4/12. Cooper, 534 W. 21st St. (255-5156).

Frederick Sommer/Jim Dine—Still-life studies by the former; photogravures by the latter. Through 4/5. PaceWildensteinMacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (759-7999).

Ezra Stoller/Weegee—Modernist photographs/Vintage and rare prints. Through 4/12. Danziger, 130 Prince St. (226-0056).

Nick Waplington—Photographs of weddings; through 4/12. Aperture's Burden, 20 E. 23rd St. (505-5555).

Museums

Alternative Museum—"Expansion Art: Artists of Our Times." Works by nine mid-career and emerging artists involved with issues of gender, national cultural icons, ethnicity, and dislocation; through 3/29. 594 Broadway (966-4444), Tues.–Sat. 11–6; contribution suggested.

American Craft Museum—"Beatrice Wood: A Centennial Tribute." A retrospective of the artist's drawings, paintings, and ceramic work; through 6/8. . . . "Messengers of Modernism: American Studio Jewelry 1940–1960"; through 6/8. 40 W. 53rd St. (956-3535); Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 10–6, Thurs. till 8 (pay as you wish till 8); $5, $2.50 students and seniors.

American Museum of Natural History—"Endangered! Exploring a World at Risk." An exhibition examining the causes and effects of species endangerment and extinction; through 9/1. Central Park West at 79th St. (769-5100); Sun.–Thurs. 10–5:45, Fri. and Sat. 10–8:45; $7 suggested contribution, $5 students and seniors, $4 children.

Asia Society—"Along the Trade Routes: Buddhist Objects From the Asia Society Collection; through 5/11. . . . "The Grand Tour: Travels With the Asia Society, Photographs by Guy Weill, 1969–1995"; through 3/30. 725 Park Ave. (288-6400), Tues., Wed., Fri., and Sat. 11–8, Sun. 12–5; $3, $1 students and seniors, free Thurs. 6–8.

Brooklyn Museum of Art—"American Paintings: Ashcan and Modernist, A Centennial Exhibition"; through 6/30. . . . "Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven: Women in Ancient Egypt." 250 objects and artworks from public and private collections, including works from the collection of the Brooklyn Museum of Art;" through 5/18. . . . "A Different Reality: Symbolist Prints From the Collection." Prints by Symbolist artists from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; through 5/7. . . . "Rediscovering James Brooks: WPA Murals and Other Figural Works." A group of twenty works selected from a gift of 244 from the artist's widow, Charlotte Brooks, including preparatory drawings, gouaches, and tempera studies for Brooks's realist-style mural, *Flight*, in the Marine Air Terminal at La Guardia Airport; through 5/4. 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000); Wed.–Sun. 10–5; $4, $2 students, $1.50 seniors.

China Institute—"Adornment for Eternity: Status and Rank in Chinese Ornament." Ancient belts, garment hooks, hair ornaments, and other treasures from the Mengdiexuan Collection; through 6/28. 125 E. 65th St. (744-8181), Mon.–Sat. 10–5, Tues. 10–8, Sun. 1–5; $5, $3 students and seniors.

Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum—"Henry Dreyfuss Directing Design: The Industrial Designer and His Work, 1929–72." Works by the legendary industrial designer who pioneered the use of human factors in the design of consumer products; through 8/31. . . . "*Disegno*: Italian Renaissance Designs for Decorative Arts"; through 5/18. 2 E. 91st St. (860-6909), Tues. 10–9, Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 12–5; $3, $1.50 seniors and students.

Dahesh Museum—"Religion and the Rustic Image in Late Academic Art." Works by major nineteenth-century artists, among them Adolphe-William Bouguereau, Jules Breton, and Léon Lhermitte; through 6/7. 601 Fifth Ave. (759-0606); Tues.–Sat. 11–6; free.

Dia Center for the Arts—"Juan Muñoz: *A Place Called Abroad.*" An installation of a streetlike environment occupied by groups of figures; through 6/29. . . . "Hanne Darboven: Kulturgeschichte 1880–1983"; through 6/1. . . . "Fred Sandback: Sculpture"; through 6/29. 548 W. 22nd St. (989-5912), Thurs.–Sun. 12–6; $4 , $2 students and seniors.

El Museo del Barrio—"The Conceptual Trend: Six Artists From Mexico City." Works by six young, conceptually oriented artists based in Mexico City; through 4/13. . . . "Alicia Creus." Thirty-five recent collage works by the Argentine artist, who has lived in New York and North Carolina since 1977; through 4/13. . . . "Contemporanea: An Installation by Maria Elena Gonzalez." A site-specific installation by the Cuban-born artist that uses curved, backlit wooden panels covered with black rubber to transform the gallery into a quiet, dimly lit arena intended for the contemplation of the loss of loved ones to AIDS; through 4/13. 1230 Fifth Ave. (831-7272); Wed.–Sun. 11–5, Thurs. 12–7; $4, $2 seniors and students.

Frick Collection—1 E. 70th St. (288-0700); Tues.–Sat. 10–6, Sun. 1–6; $5, $3 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Grey Art Gallery & Study Center—"Art of the Everyday: France in the 90s." Works by eight young French artists whose art draws on everyday experiences; through 100 Washington Square East (998-6848), Tues., Thurs., Fri. 11–6, Wed. 11–8:30, Sat. 11–5; free.

Guggenheim Museum—"A Century of Sculpture: The Nasher Collection." The New York premiere of the collection formed by Patsy R. and Raymond D. Nasher, with sculptures by Matisse, Picasso, Brancusi, Giacometti, and others; through 6/1. . . . "Rrose is a Rrose is a Rrose: Gender Performance in Photography." An exhibition that explores the various ways in which identity has been theatrically constructed in photography, from Man Ray's 1921 portrait of Marcel Duchamp as his feminine alter-ego Rrose Sélavy to the self-portraiture and computer-generated images of contemporary artists; through 4/27. 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (423-3500); Sun.–Wed. 10–6, Fri. and Sat. 10–8 (Fri. 6–8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; $8, $5 students and seniors.

Guggenheim Museum SoHo—"Art/Fashion." An exhibition illustrating the ways in which art and fashion have converged over the years; through 6/8. . . . "Bill Viola: Fire, Water, Breath." Two new video installations; through 3/23. 575 Broadway (423-3500); Wed.–Fri. 11–6, Sat. 11–8, Sun. 11–6; $6, $4 students and seniors.

Jewish Museum—"Bordering on Fiction: Chantal Akerman's 'D'Est.' " A film-and-video installation of the Belgian film-director's feature-film documenting her journey to eastern Germany, Poland, and Russia in the early nineties; through 5/27. . . . "A Witness to History: Yevgeny Khaldei, Soviet Photojournalist." Images documenting major events during WWII by one of Russia's most important combat photographers; through 4/13. . . . "Morris Louis: The Charred Journal Series, 1951." The artist's black-and-white abstract paintings from his "Charred Journal" series that memorialize the loss of books burned by the Nazis during the Holocaust; through 4/13. . . . "Rico Lebrun: The Holocaust Paintings." Paintings and drawings executed between 1955 and 1959 that were based on photographs the artist found in the 1946 edition of *U.S. Camera Annual*, published shortly after the liberation of the concentration camps; through 4/13. . . . "Holidays! Jewish Seasons and Celebrations"; through 4/19. 1109 Fifth Ave. (423-3200); Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs. 11–5:45, Tues. 11–8 (Tues. after 5; free); $7, $5 students and seniors.

Metropolitan Museum of Art—"The Glory of Byzantium." The Second Golden Age of Byzantium (A.D. 843–1261) is the subject of this exhibition, which comprises more than 350 masterpieces in all media from the museums and church treasuries of more than twenty countries; through 7/6. . . . "Giambattista Tiepolo." America's first major retrospective of the eighteenth-century Italian master's paintings and etchings; through 4/27. . . . "Venetian Prints and Books in the Age of Tiepolo"; through 4/27. . . . "Domenico Tiepolo: Drawings, Prints, and Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art." Works by the son and collaborator of Giambattista Tiepolo; through 4/27. . . . "Christian Dior." A retrospective of the designer's works drawn mainly from the collection of the museum's Costume Institute; through 3/23. . . . "The Florene M. Schoenborn Bequest: Artists of the School of Paris"; through 5/4. . . . "American Tonalism: Paintings, Drawings, Prints, and Photographs." Works by James Abbott McNeill Whistler, George Inness, Arthur Davies, Edward Steichen, and others that illuminate a phase of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century American art that emphasized subdued poetic mood and muted coloration; through 6/1. . . . "Indian Court Painting: 16th–19th Century"; 3/20–7/6. . . . "Following the Stars: Images of the Zodiac in Islamic Art"; through 8/31. . . . "Enduring Rhythms: African Musical Instruments and the Americas"; through 3/30. . . . "The Art of the Renaissance Woodworker: The Gubbio Studiolo Restored." An exhibition that complements the museum's recent installation of a room of inlaid trompe-l'oeil panels that was once the *studiolo* of Duke Federico da Montefeltro; through 4/30. 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (879-5500); Tues.–Thurs. and Sun. 9:30–5:15, Fri. and Sat. 9:30–9; $7 contribution, $3.50 children and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (923-3700); Tues.–Sun. 9:30–4:45 (closes at 5:15 between April and September); $8, $4 seniors and students.

Museum for African Art—"Art That Heals: The Image as Medicine in Ethiopia"; Through 8/31. . . . "To Cure and Protect: Sickness and Health in African Art"; Through 8/31. 593 Broadway (966-1313); Tues.–Fri. 10:30–5:30, Sat. and Sun. 12–6; $4, $2 children, seniors, and students.

Museum of American Folk Art—"The Alternative World of Henry Darger." A retrospective of paintings by the self-taught Chicago artist (1892–1973) best known for his eccentric watercolor narratives in which little girls struggle to escape enslavement by ruthless male warriors; through 4/27. 2 Lincoln Square (595-9533), Tues.–Sun. 11:30–7:30; free.

Museum of Modern Art—"The Photomontages of Hannah Höch." The first U.S. retrospective of the German artist's photomontages; through 5/20. . . . "Manuel Alvarez Bravo." A retrospective of photographs by the twentieth-century Mexican master; through 5/18. . . . "Willem de Kooning: The Late Paintings, the 1980s." The artist, who ceased painting in 1990, painted the 40 canvases in this exhibition between 1981 and 1987; through 4/29. . . . "American Photography 1890–1965 From the Collection"; through 7/8. . . . "Projects: Bul Lee/Chie Matsui"; through 3/25. . . . "The Maximal Sixties: Pop, Op, Figuration." Pop, Op, and Kinetic artworks from the museum's collection; through 4/29. . . . "A Singular Vision." Prints From Landfall Press"; through 5/6. 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480); Sat.–Tues. 11–6, Thurs. and Fri. noon–8:30, closed Wed.; $8.50, $5.50 students and seniors (Thurs. and Fri. 5:30–8:30, pay what you wish).

Museum of the City of New York—"The Streets and Beyond: New York Photographs." Photographs of New York street life by well-known New York photographers; through 6/8. . . . "New York Toy Stories." A selection of toys from the museum's collection, ranging in date from the eighteenth century to the present; through 4/27. . . . "Back in the Days: East Harlem Old and Young"; through 3/23. . . . "The Art of Politics: Cartoons by Cassel, Kirby, & Arlt"; through 4/6. . . . "A Museum For a New Century: The Museum of the City of New York in the 21st Century"; through 6/29. 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (534-1672); Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 1–5; $5, $3 students and seniors.

National Academy of Design—"A Community of Creativity: A Century of MacDowell Colony Artists." A survey of paintings, sculptures, and works on paper by artists chosen to reside at the colony since the turn of the century; through 3/23. . . . "Landscapes of Louis Rémy Mignot: A Southern Painter Abroad"; through 5/11. 1083 Fifth Ave. (369-4880); Wed.–Sun. 12–5 (Fri. until 8); $5, $3.50 seniors, students, and children under 16.

New Museum of Contemporary Art—"Remota: Airmail Paintings by Eugenio Dittborn." The first major New York exhibition of the Chilean artist's "Airmail Paintings," in which he folds sections of paintings into custom-made cardboard envelopes and mails them to exhibitions; through 4/13. 583 Broadway (219-1222), Wed., Thurs., Fri., and Sun. 12–6, Sat. 12–8 (6–8 free); $4, $3 artists, students, and seniors.

New York Public Library—"Wild New York: The Printmaker and the Natural Landscape From the Age of Exploration Through the Twentieth Century"; through 6/28. . . . "Let There Be Light: William Tyndale and the Making of the English Bible"; through 5/17. . . . "Richard Tuttle: Books and Prints at the New York Public Library." A survey of the artist's books and prints from 1965 to the present; through 5/31. . . . "Artful Interiors: Rooms With a View." A survey of architectural and design publications covering the period 1750 to 1950; through 3/29. Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (869-8089); Mon. 10–6, Tues.–Wed. 11–6, Thurs.–Sat. 10–6; free.

New-York Historical Society—"An Unquenchable Thirst: Springs and Wells of New York City"; through 6/1. . . . "Taking Flight: John James Audubon and the Watercolors for *Birds of America*"; through 9/7. . . . "Before Central Park: The Life and Death of Seneca Village." An exhibition of documents relating to the African-American community called Seneca Village that existed from the 1820s through the 1850s on what is now the west side of Central Park; through 8/10. 2 W. 77th St. (873-3400); Wed.–Sun. noon–5; $5, $3 seniors and children.

Pierpont Morgan Library—"Tiepolo and His Circle: Drawings in American Collections." Drawings by the eighteenth-century Venetian master Giambattista Tiepolo, as well as works by his sons, Domenico and Lorenzo, and his pupils, on loan from public and private American collections; through 4/13. . . . "Around Tiepolo: Eighteenth-Century Venetian Drawings in the Pierpont Morgan Library"; through 4/13. 29 E. 36th St. (685-0008); Tues.–Fri. 10:30–5, Sat. 10:30–6, Sun. noon–6; $5 suggested donation, $3 students and seniors.

Studio Museum in Harlem—"Growing Forward: Prints, Drawings, Sculpture, and Public Art by Richard Hunt, 1986–1996." An exhibition that interprets the influences of African-American history and culture, biology, and the urban industrial environment on the artist's work; through 6/29. 144 W. 125th St. (864-4500); Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 1–6; $5, $3 seniors and students.

Whitney Museum of American Art—"1997 Biennial Exhibition." The sixty-ninth Biennial exhibition, featuring 200 works by approximately 70 artists; 3/20–6/1. 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (570-3676); Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 11–6, Thurs. 1–8; $8, $6 students and seniors (free Thurs. 6–8).

Auctions

Christie's—502 Park Ave. (546-1000). 3/19 at 10: "Japanese Lacquer." On view from 3/15. 3/20 at 10: "The Jingguantang Collection, Part II, Fine and Important Chinese Art and Ceramics." On view from 3/15. 3/20 at 2 and 3/21 at 10: "Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art, a Private Collection From Hawaii." On view from 3/15. 3/22 at 10 and 2: "Magnificent Wine From a Private Collection." On view from 3/21.

Christie's East—219 E. 67th St. (546-1000). 3/19 at 1: "Antiquities and Souvenirs of the Grand Tour." On view from 3/14.

Doyle—175 E. 87th St. (427-2730). 3/19 at at 10: "Fine Furniture, Decorative Arts, and Paintings." On view from 3/15.

Sotheby's—York Ave. at 72nd St. (606-7000). 3/19 at 10:15 and 2: "Chinese Works of Art." On view from 3/14. 3/20 at 10:15 and 2: "Indian and Southeast Asian Art." On view from 3/16. 3/21 at 10:15 and 2: "Japanese Works of Art." On view from 3/16. 3/22 at 10:15: "Arcade Asian." On view from 3/16. 3/25 at 10:15 and 2: "Arcade American Paintings." On view from 3/21.

Swann Galleries—104 E. 25th St. (254-4710). 3/20 at 10:30: "Science, Medicine, and Natural History." On view from 3/15.

Talent

Water Ship Down

Impending disaster takes on a certain charm in Janet Gillespie's intimately scaled paintings of boats and ships—sinking—at sea. At Adam Baumgold Fine Art, 128 East 72nd Street; through April 19.

theater

Charles Busch Plays It Straight...Gilda Lives

Broadway

Previews and Openings

An American Daughter—Wendy Wasserstein's new political comedy, starring Hal Holbrook and Kate Nelligan. $35–$50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/13 opening. *Cort, 138 W. 48th St. (239-6200).*

Annie—Nell Carter stars as Miss Hannigan in this twentieth-anniversary production of everyone's favorite orphan musical. $40–$70. Wed.–Sat. at 7:30, Sun. at 1 and 6, Wed. and Sat. at 2. In previews for a 3/26 opening. *Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

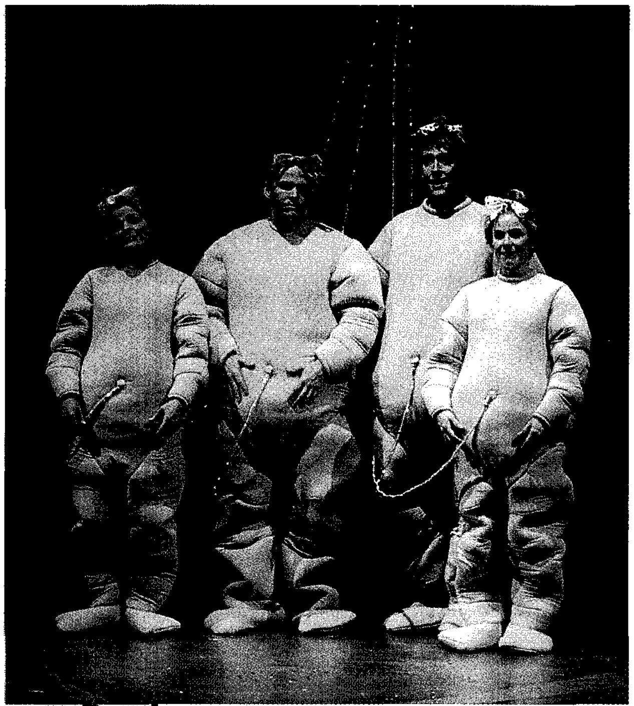
Barrymore—Christopher Plummer impersonates the original matinee idol, John Barrymore, in a play by William Luce that re-creates Barrymore's epic performance as Richard III. $25–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 3/25 opening. *Music Box Theatre, 239 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Dream: The Johnny Mercer Musical—The Golden Age of American pop music, set to songs by Mercer, Duke Ellington, Billy Strayhorn, and many more, written between 1920 and 1960. $45–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/3 opening. *Royale Theatre, 242 W. 45th St. (307-4100).*

Mandy Patinkin in Concert—A benefit engagement, featuring Patinkin singing hits from his long musical career. $20–$60. 3/18 and 3/19 at 8. *Lyceum Theatre, 149 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Play On!—Songs by Duke Ellington, plot by William Shakespeare (*Twelfth Night*), and a setting in prewar Harlem. Written by Cheryl L. West; conceived and directed by Sheldon Epps. $40–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 3/20 opening. *Brooks Atkinson Theatre, 256 W. 47th St. (307-4100).*

The Young Man From Atlanta—Horton Foote's Pulitzer Prize–winning drama, starring Rip Torn and Shirley Knight. $25–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 3/27 opening. *Longacre Theatre, 220 W. 48th St. (239-6200).*



Previews

Funny Bones

Now, why would a musical change its name from *Doctors and Diseases* to *Doctor Doctor*, on the eve of its New York debut? Perhaps because theater audiences, however accustomed to black humor, don't really like to be reminded of lurking germs on a night out. But squeamishness gets swept away when the shapely chorus line sings the chubbette anthem "It's My Fat." Suddenly, microbes don't matter.

Now Playing

Beauty and the Beast—A musical based on a movie based on a fairy tale. Setting box-office and, presumably, merchandising records even as we speak. Kerry Butler plays the girl; Chuck Wagner plays the (hairy) boy. With Tony-award-winning costume design by Ann Hould-Ward; lyrics by Tim Rice and the late Howard Ashman; score by Alan Menken. $22.50–$70. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. Opened: 4/18/94. *Palace Theatre, 1564 Broadway, at 47th St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Ground Rules:

Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where half-price tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and 2 World Trade Center, mezzanine level; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-508-0740.

Bring In 'da Noise, Bring In 'da Funk—George C. Wolfe and Savion Glover's Tony-winning meditation on the pre-Hollywood ethnic roots of tap dancing. $20–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs.*

Cats—Now and for the foreseeable future. By Andrew Lloyd Webber, of course, with an assist from T. S. Eliot. $37.50–$65. Dark Thurs. Opened: 10/7/82. *Winter Garden Theater, 1634 Broadway, at 50th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Chicago—It was a gamble to transfer the Encores! production of *Chicago* to Broadway, but since *Chicago* is about women who kill their men and the mercenary lawyer who gets them off, gambling seems like the merest peccadillo. Especially when, as here, it pays off. Ann Reinking is suavely slinky with a demureness that oozes sex; Bebe Neuwirth does a scissors kick or two while maintaining her come-hither brand of snootiness. And James Naughton doles out dearly bought legal strategy like alms to an importunate beggar. Minimalism prevails. All is concise, calibrated, calculated, but nothing is stinted on. Every bosom, pelvis, and long leg is in business to keep the women in the audience identifying, the men panting. If Chicago in the twenties was like this, it was more fun than Periclean Athens. Also starring Joel Grey. (Simon: 12/2/96) $20–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 11/14/96. *Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Defending the Caveman—Rob Becker's one-man show, now starring Michael Chiklis, which posits a genetically inherited difference from prehistoric days to explain why men ("hunters") and women ("gatherers") get irritated with each other in Bloomingdale's. $49.50. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 5. *Booth Theatre, 222 W. 45th St. (228-3626, or just dial CAVEMAN). 1 hr. 40 mins.*

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum—A new revival of the 1962 musical, featuring Whoopi Goldberg as a female Pseudolus. $60–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *St. James Theatre, 246 W. 44th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 20 mins.*

The King and I—Along with Lincoln Center's recent *Carousel* and the recent Broadway production of *State Fair*, the Rodgers and Hammerstein renaissance continues apace with their famous musical adaptation of the memoir *Anna and the King of Siam*, featuring contemporary heartthrob Lou Diamond Phillips (un-bald) in the role created by Yul Brynner. Faith Prince stars as Anne, starting 3/21. $25–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Neil Simon Theatre, 250 W. 52nd St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 45 mins.*

The Last Night of Ballyhoo—Alfred Uhry's first new play since *Driving Miss Daisy*, set in 1939 Atlanta on the eve of the premiere of *Gone With the Wind*. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 2/27/97. *Helen Hayes Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. (307-4100).*

Les Misérables—This pop-opera adaptation of the sprawling Victor Hugo novel, currently in its tenth year on Broadway, recently became the fourth-longest-running show in Broadway history. With a book by Alain Boublil and Claude-Michel Schonberg; music by the latter; lyrics by Herbert Kretzmer. $15–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 3/12/87. *Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (239-6200). 3 hrs. 15 mins.*

Master Class—In the early seventies, opera star Maria Callas took her diva persona from stage to classroom with a celebrated series of tutorials for young hopefuls. Slightly fictionalized, they're the subject of Terrence McNally's newest play, starring Dixie Carter as the great *monstre sacré* herself. $32.50–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. *Golden Theatre, 252 W. 45th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Miss Saigon—This reworking of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* set in Vietnam during the fall of Saigon

Photograph by Chris Stewart.

has just celebrated its fifth anniversary on Broadway. Score by Claude-Michel Schonberg; lyrics by Alain Boublil and Richard Maltby Jr.; directed by Nicholas Hytner. $15–$70. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2; dark Sun. Opened: 4/11/91. *Broadway Theater, 1681 Broadway, at 53rd St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Once Upon a Mattress—Sarah Jessica Parker plays the oversensitive royal in this musical version of Hans Christian Andersen's *The Princess and the Pea*. For insomniac luxury-lovers of all ages. $40–$75. Thurs. and Fri. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. Opened 12/18/96. *Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

The Phantom of the Opera—In its ninth year on Broadway, Andrew Lloyd Webber's blockbuster continues to pack them in, passing the 3,200-performance mark recently and edging into sixth place among the longest-running musicals. And strangely—or wisely, depending on your point of view—it's no nearer to becoming a movie than on the day it opened. $15–$70. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 1/26/88. *Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Present Laughter—A clever fellow, this Scott Elliott, but now he has gone too far. The director has taken Noel Coward's sleek, sophisticated comedy and staged it as the crassest farce. Garry Essendine, the fey, egocentric, matinee-idol hero, is doubtless modeled on the author himself, but Coward never fully emerged from the closet. It is not for Elliott to out one of his plays. Here the women are made shriller, sillier, or more predatory than called for, the men more effete, narcissistic, overtly homosexual. Frank Langella does ample justice to Elliott's Essendine: One wonders what he could have done with Coward's. (Simon: 12/2/96) $15–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 11/18/96. *Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. (239-6200).*

Rent—The late Jonathan Larson's reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème* as it might be lived by a gaggle of contemporary young and hip types living in the East Village. $30–$67. 50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 45 mins.*

Smokey Joe's Cafe: The Songs of Leiber and Stoller—They say the neon lights are bright on Broadway, and when this show—drawn from the score Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller composed to accompany the American baby-boomer childhood experience—breezes into New York City, people gonna scrape and bow. You don't like crazy music? (We keep forgettin'.) Don't feel that way; baby, that is rock and roll. A tip, tip, tip, young blood: Buy yourself a ticket, sit down in the very first row. Have a drink and dig the band. Can't you hear the flügelhorn? Can't you hear the bell? Come to them sickly, they'll make you well. We don't know why our heart flips (and, baby, we don't care); we only know it does.

From Left: Alison Fraser, John Ellison Conlee, and Ruth Williamson.

Previews

Natural Selection

"Some people are anti-fur or pro-whales," says Charles Busch. "I'd like to champion the cause of the sexy, funny woman." Though Julia Louis-Dreyfus and Goldie Hawn may not appreciate his charity, Busch, by rights, can join the club. "After all," he points out, "I've been one myself all these years." With a résumé unmatched by drag's other reigning divas, Busch is now making his first foray into the world of, shall we say, *straight* musical theater, as co-author of *The Green Heart* (lyrics by Rusty McGee), opening on April 1. And while the sentiment might make him unpopular among his sisters, the trip has reminded him that there's no substitute for nature. "I must say, there's something about a *real* outrageous lady that just kills ya."

In *Green Heart*, a breezy, high-camp comedy—the first original musical developed at Manhattan Theater Club in five years—there are three XX-chromosome stunners: a wallflower botanist-millionaire who falls for a gold-digging playboy, the philanderer's Eurotrash mistress, and a butch maid who'd like them all dead. Horticultural jokes propel much of the silliness (mostly about who's willing to murder whom to get at the millionaire's inheritance), a theme that only enriches the fertile ground of arch Ab Fab caricature. (Who said women had to be deep?) Womanly wiles aside, Busch is still in favor of cross-pollination. "Don't you think," says Busch of Giuliani's *Victor/Victoria* stunt last week, "he looked better in drag than out of it?"

VANESSA GRIGORIADIS

Heartbreakin' nights, only in America. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. $35–$70. *At the Virginia Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. (239-6200)?* Uh-huh. *2 hrs. 10 mins.*

Stanley—Circle in the Square returns with this acclaimed London show about English artist Stanley Spencer. Starring Antony Sher, making his New York debut in the title role. $10–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 2/20/97. *Circle in the Square, 1622 Broadway, at 50th St. (239-6200).*

Sunset Boulevard—Andrew Lloyd Webber's (mega-) musical adaptation of the Billy Wilder film masterpiece about a deranged Hollywood dinosaur and her reluctant boy toy. London's Elaine Paige (*Evita, Cats*) recently took over from Betty Buckley as Norma Desmond. $25–$70. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 11/17/94. Through 3/22. *Minskoff Theatre, 200 W. 45th St. (307-4007). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Three Sisters—Scott Elliott's all-star production of Chekhov's classic tale of yearning. With Billy Crudup, Amy Irving, Eric Stoltz, David Strathairn, Lili Taylor, and Jeanne Tripplehorn. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2. Opened: 2/13/97. *Roundabout Theatre's Stage Right, 1530 Broadway at 45th St. (869-8400).*

Victor/Victoria—Reprising her title role in husband Blake Edwards's 1982 film, Julie Andrews—returning to the Broadway stage for the first time since the early sixties and *Camelot*—struts her stuff in (the late) Henry Mancini and Leslie Bricusse's musical adaptation of Mr. Edwards's comedy of sexual manners. "One way or another, *Victor/Victoria* will make history. Like a karaoke record, it's got everything minus one: a true star, a solid cast and ensemble, savvy staging and choreography, lush scenery and costumes and lighting, a funny (or at least doggedly farcical) book—everything but one really good song. This will be the test: Can a Broadway musical make it without a score? Julie Andrews has a look, voice, and personality that live in perfect harmony with one another, whether she is singing, dancing, acting, or just being. But there is—or rather, isn't—the unrelievedly second-rate music of the late Henry Mancini, augmented by three songs from Frank Wildhorn, which blend in seamlessly, alas. All the lyrics are by the once capable Leslie Bricusse, now given to such stuff as 'Paris is so sexy/ Riding in a taxi [texi?]/ Gives you apoplexy.' Still, *Victor/Victoria* may be the best unmusical musical you are ever going to see." (Simon; 11/6/95.) With Tony Roberts, Michael Nouri, and Rachel York; written and directed by Mr. Edwards. $20–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Marquis, 1535 Broadway (307-4100). 2 hrs. 45 mins.*

Off Broadway

Previews and Openings

Bunny Bunny—Alan Zweibel's three-character play about his fourteen-year relationship with Gilda Radner. $35–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3, Sun. at 3 and 7. In previews for a 3/23 opening. *Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. (239-6200).*

Dealer's Choice—Patrick Marber's suspense comedy, set in a small London restaurant and based around a poker game. $32. Tues.–Sun. at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/8 opening. *Manhattan Theatre Club at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (581-1212).*

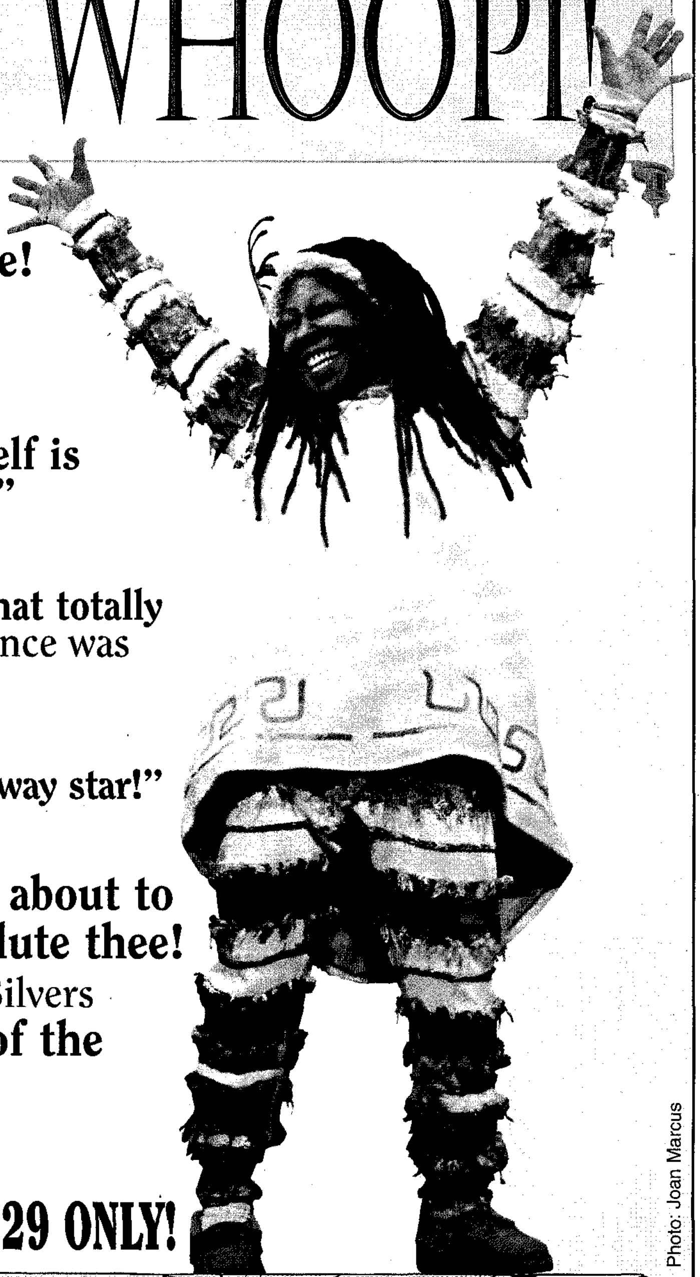
Doctor Doctor—An original musical revue by Peter Ekstrom featuring medically minded arias like "Eighty Thousand Orgasms," "I Hope I Never Get," and "It's My Fat." But do they make house calls? $15–$35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. In previews for a 3/26 opening. *Players Theatre, 115 MacDougal St. (239-6200).*

God's Heart—Craig Lucas's latest, starring Amy Brenneman and Julie Kavner, among others, as eight urbanites who form an unlikely connection; directed by Joe Mantello. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. In previews for a 4/6 opening. *Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, Lincoln Center (239-6200).*

The Green Heart—Charles Busch and Rusty Magee's new horticultural-themed musical, set in the romantic environs of the potting shed. $30–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2:30, Sun. at 7. In

Photograph by Joan Marcus.

ALL HAIL WHOOPI!



"Uproarious! She's irresistible! As welcome as springtime!"

—Dennis Cunningham, WCBS-TV

"★★★★! All in all, it's brilliant! Whoopi's big, lovable, raucous self is joyful and deliciously irreverent."

—David Patrick Stearns, USA Today

"The audience roared! Whoopi is that totally indefinable thing–a star! The audience was eating out of her hand."

—Clive Barnes, New York Post

"A brilliant comic–and a true Broadway star!"

—Pat Collins, WWOR-TV

"Hail Whoopi! Those who are about to die from laughing too hard salute thee! Somewhere, Zero Mostel and Phil Silvers are applauding. **FORUM is one of the must-see joints in town."**

—Michael Sommers, The Star-Ledger

Photo: Joan Marcus

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previews for a 4/1 opening. *Manhattan Theatre Club, Variety Arts Theatre, 110 Third Ave. (239-6200).*

The Hairy Ape—The Wooster Group presents Eugene O'Neill's expressionist drama. Directed by Elizabeth LeCompte; starring Willem Dafoe. $45–$55. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 7. In previews for a 4/3 opening. *Selwyn Theater, 229 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

How I Learned To Drive—Paula Vogel's new coming-of-age tale, starring Mary-Louise Parker and David Morse. Directed by Mark Brokaw. $30. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 3/16/97. *Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. (353-3874).*

Minor Demons—Bruce Graham's new play about a big-time lawyer's return to a small town outside Pittsburgh. $40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 3/16/97. *Century Center, 111 E. 15th St. (239-6200).*

On House—A comic expose of what goes on behind the scrubs in a suburban Catholic hospital. $25. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. In previews for a 4/2 opening. *WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. (206-0523).*

Promises, Promises—Encores! second presentation, starring Martin Short and Christine Baranski, is Bacharach and David's musical version of Neil Simon's *The Apartment*. $25–$55. 3/20 and 3/21 at 8, 3/22 at 2 and 8, 3/23 at 6:30. *City Center, 54th St. bet. Sixth and Seventh Aves. (581-1212).*

Sympathetic Magic—A new play by Lanford Wilson, centering on a contemporary couple and some difficult life decisions. $40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun at 2 and 7. Opens 4/16. *Second Stage Theatre, 2162 Broadway at 76th St. (873-6103).*

Tap Dogs—An Australian import, a rollicking tap show with a gritty edge. $20–$35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 3/16/97. *Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. (307-4100).*

Now Playing

Americana—$20. Fri. at 8, Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. *Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. (838-9090).*

Antony and Cleopatra—Vanessa Redgrave directs and stars with David Harewood in this new adaptation of Shakespeare's Egyptian history. $40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Opened: 3/13/97. *Anspacher/The Public Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (260-2400).*

Beat: A Subway Cop's Comedy—Comic reminiscence of ten years on the beat, by John DiResta, who remains a New York City Transit cop. $30. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 9:30, Sun. at 3 and 5:30. *Kaufman Theatre, 534 W. 42nd St. (279-4200).*

Blue Man Group: Tubes—Smart silliness, with toilet paper, neon-colored paint, cereal, etc. Kids love it, and adults can pretend the show's an ironic commentary on performance art. $39–$49. Tues., Wed., Thurs. at 8, Fri, and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. Opened: 11/17/91. *Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (254-4370).*

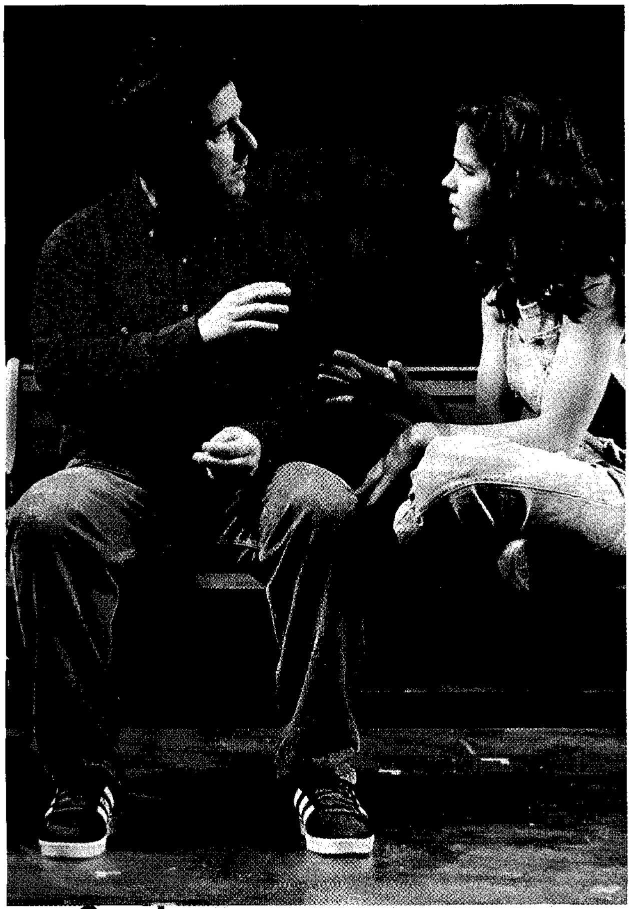
A Brief History of White Music—A new musical looking at white pop music from swing to the seventies. $40. Tues.–Sat. at 8:15, Sat. at 2:15, Sun. at 3:15 and 7:15. *The Village Gate, 240 W. 52nd St. (307-5252).*

Capitol Steps—A new political musical revue performed by former congressional staff members. $40. Mon., Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7. *John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

The Changeling—Theater for a New Audience's second production of the season, a revival of the Jacobean tragicomedy. $35. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30 (at 8 after 2/28), Sat. at 2. Opened: 3/1/97. *Playhouse at St. Clement's Church, 423 W. 46th St. (279-4200).*

The Fantasticks—The musical perennial that, happily, refuses to go away. $35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 7, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 5/3/60. *Sullivan St. Theater, 181 Sullivan St. (674-3838).*

Forbidden Broadway Strikes Back!—Some titles say it all, and Gerard Alessandrini's newest update of his long-running musical spoof poking fun at the assorted absurdities of the Great White Way couldn't arrive in town at a more—well, let's be kind and say propitious time. $35–$40. Mon., Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 7:30, Sat. at 10, Sun. at 3; food and drink available/optional. *Triad, 158 W. 72nd St. (799-4599).*



Opening
Love at First Skit

Writer Alan Zweibel and comedienne Gilda Radner became fast friends on their first day of 'Saturday Night Live' rehearsals, circa 1975. 'Bunny Bunny,' subtitled 'Gilda Radner: A Sort of Romantic Comedy,' is Zweibel's dramatization of their fourteen-year friendship.

Full Gallop—This is the monodrama—I mean monofarce—about Diana Vreeland, the fearsome fashion arbiter, who for decades wielded style-making power from behind her desks at *Harper's Bazaar* and then *Vogue*. A whirlwind bearing aloft talented models, designers, and photographers, she was a scintillating wit and fabulous character in her own right and wrong. We are granted an hour and three quarters with a fabled *monstre sacré* in her demonic digs as we listen to her recollect a chicly checkered past; pass canny judgment on people and fashions and life; conduct uproarious dialogues with her skeptical French maid, Yvonne, over the intercom; and hobnob telephonically with the luminaries of international society. As sublimely performed by Mary Louise Wilson—whose makeup, utterance, and demeanor fit Vreeland to a tee—this is the highest hilarity, the Everest of camp. Hear Miss Wilson say, "You can't destroy Europe; you can't even nick it," or "We are all allowed a splash of bad taste—no taste is what I am against," and you will feel transported into Thalia's lap. (Simon: 10/14/96.) $37.50–$40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (239-6200).*

Godspell—The first all-black production of Stephen Schwartz's 1971 rock opera. $25. Thurs. and Fri. at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened 2/6. *Victoria Theatre, 235 W. 125th St. (769-8183).*

Grandma Sylvia's Funeral—An audience-participation comedy akin to *Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding*, written by Glenn Wein and Amy Lord Blumsack. When Grandma Sylvia dies, a power struggle ensues among family members. $37.50–$57.50, which includes a mitzvah meal. Opened: 10/9/94. Wed. and Thurs. at 2, Thurs. at 7:30, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 9, Sun. at 1 and 5. *Soho Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. (691-1555).*

Howard Crabtree's When Pigs Fly—One of 1996's more melancholy theater trends was the posthumous musical. Like *Rent* composer Jonathan Larsen, costumer and musical "conceiver" Howard Crabtree passed away in June, days after completing work on his latest backstage-comedy revue. But the show, as developed by Mr. Crabtree with Dick Gallagher and Mark Waldrop, goes on. $40. Mon., Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 2 and 5. *Douglas Fairbanks Theater, 432 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

A Huey P. Newton Story—Roger Guenveur Smith's take on the life of the founder of the Black Panther Party, with sound design by Marc Anthony Thompson. $20. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. Through 3/23. *LuEsther Hall, Joseph Papp Public Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (239-6200).*

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change—They're here. They're straight. Get used to it. It's a daring innovation, perhaps, but this musical revue about what, in the context of most contemporary musicals, seems an amusingly quaint subject these days—heterosexual love—has bravely decided to buck the trend. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (239-6200).*

In-Betweens—A new play by Bryan Goluboff, a love story set in the Bronx. $35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2:30 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 2/18/97. *Cherry Lane Theatre, 38 Commerce St. (239-6200).*

Kerouac—A musical based on the Beat poet's life. $20. Fri.–Sun. at 8. *Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. (838-8528).*

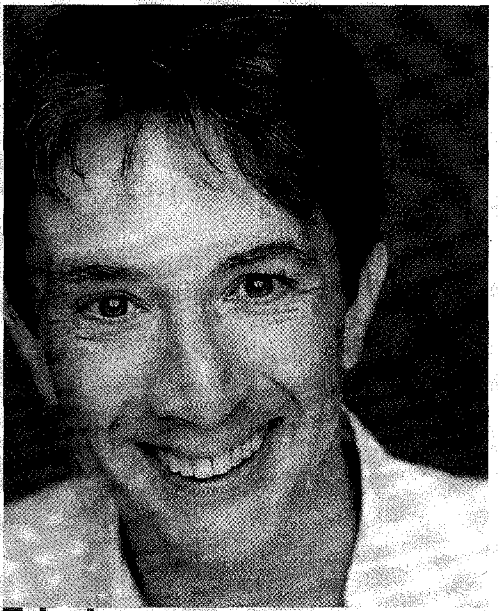
Late Nite Catechism—Maripat Donovan as a parochial-school-teaching nun backed by a magisterium of unassailable moral authority and some mean wrist action with a ruler. $35. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 5. *St. Luke's Church Annex, 308 W. 46th St. (239-6200).*

Magic on Broadway—Like it says, performed by illusionist and prestidigitator Joseph Gabriel. $25–$45. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2 and 7, Sat. at 2 and 5, Sun. at 3 and 6. *Lamb's Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

Making Porn—A play about the gay-porn industry starring real-life porn stars Blue Blake and Ryan Idol. $30–$35. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. *Actors' Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. South (239-6200).*

Mother Courage—The Eric Bentley/Darius Milhaud adaptation of Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and*

Photograph by Mark Gavin.



Talent

The Original *Rent?*

The second semi-staged musical from Encores! is the swinging sixties gem *Promises, Promises,* based on Neil Simon's *The Apartment,* with music and lyrics by Burt Bacharach and Hal David. Martin Short stars as Chuck Baxter, the clerk who lets his pad for executives' trysts; Christine Baranski vamps in a cameo role.

Her Children, presented in rotating repertory. $24. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Opened: 1/19/97. Through 5/18. *Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. (677-0060).*

Names—A new play by Mark Kemble about the Hollywood "red scare," starring the legendary Tovak Feldshuh. $30. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. Through 3/31. *American Jewish Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. (633-9797).*

Not Waving . . .—Kyra Sedgwick stars as a young woman trying to climb back to sanity in Gen LeRoy's first play. $33–$35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. Opened: 3/5/97. *Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. (333-4052).*

One Flea Spare—Dianne Wiest stars in Naomi Wallace's dark drama about class warfare in seventeenth-century London. $35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2, Sun. at 7. Opened: 3/9/97. *Martinson Hall/The Public Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (260-2400).*

Othello—Set in the Mediterranean Renaissance, starring Abner Genece and Joseph Menino. $24. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Opened: 3/16/97. *Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. (677-0060).*

Perfect Crime—Warren Manzi's long-running thriller about a wealthy psychiatrist accused of murdering her husband, and the small-town detective who tries to prove she committed the "perfect crime." $35. Mon. and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 4/5/87. *Duffy Theatre, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. (695-3401).*

Psychopathia Sexualis—John Patrick Shanley's fetish comedy, starring Daniel Gerroll, Andrew McCarthy, and Park Overall. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2:30, Sun. at 7. Opened: 2/25/97. *Manhattan Theatre Club's Stage I, City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (581-1212).*

A Question of Mercy—The world premiere of David Rabe's meditation on assisted suicide (obviously this year's soul-search issue). $25. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. Opened: 2/25/97. *New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. (460-5475).*

Scapin—Bill Irwin's fresh adaptation of Molière's classic tale of a servant who is pulling all the strings. $50. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. Through 3/23. *Laura Pels at the Roundabout, 1530 Broadway, at 45th St. (869-8400).*

Stomp—As the title implies, a loud, aggressive, and energetic show in which a troupe of performers dances, claps, and generally bangs on everything in sight. Featuring buckets, brooms, trash-can lids, and, yes, the kitchen sink. More engaging than you might expect. $29.50–$42.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 2/27/94. *Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., bet. 7th and 8th Sts. (477-2477).*

Stonewall Jackson's House—A new comedy about a young woman who violates racial taboos—political correctness, take that! $35. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7. Through 4/27. *American Place Theatre, 111 W. 46th St. (239-6200).*

Three One-Acts by Sam Shepard—*The Sad Lament of Pecos Bill on the Eve of Killing His Wife, Killer's Head,* and *Action;* directed by Darrell Larson. $25. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. Opened: 2/9/97. Through 3/23. *Susan Stein Shiva Theater, Joseph Papp Public Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (239-6200).*

Tokyo Shock Boys—Japanese vaudeville, with a little Stooges mixed in. $25–$35. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. at 8 and 10:30, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. Opened: 2/19/97. *Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, bet. 6th Ave. and MacDougal St. (307-4100).*

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding—A wedding at *St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St.,* then a reception at *Vinnie's, 147 Waverly Pl.,* with Italian buffet, champagne, and wedding cake. Wonderfully tacky—and it's lasted longer than a lot of real marriages. $60–$75. Tues.–Sun. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 2. Opened: 2/6/88. *(279-4200).*

Two Gentlemen of Verona—Blue Light Theater Company presents Shakespeare's early comedy, directed by Dylan Baker. $25–$30. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 7. Opened: 2/23/97. *Theatre at St. Peter's Church, 619 Lexington Ave., at 53rd St. (935-5820).*

Violet—A new musical by Jeanine Tesori and Brian Crawley based on *The Ugliest Pilgrim* by Doris Betts; directed by Susan H. Schulman. $40. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 3/11/97. *Playwrights Horizons, Wilder Theatre, 416 W. 42nd St. (279-4200).*

Off-Off Broadway

The Beekeeper's Daughter—A new play by Karen Malpede about a disrupted idyll on a Mediterranean isle. $15–$25. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 4/13. *Theatre Row Theatre, 424 W. 42nd St.(279-4200).*

Easter—Naked Angels presents a new play by Will Scheffer, starring Jodie Markell. $12. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7. *Theatre 3, 311 W. 43rd St. (397-7841).*

Good As New—Peter Hedges's new dysfunctional-family comedy, starring Laura Esterman, John Spencer, and Jennifer Dundas. $25. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun at 3. Opens 3/26. *MCC Theatre, 120 W. 28th St. (727-7765).*

Gross Indecency—The three trials of Oscar Wilde. $12. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun at 7. *Greenwich House Theatre, 27 Barrow St. (721-3385).*

Nude With Violin—Noël Coward's art-world spoof. $15. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 3/23. *St. Bart's Playhouse, Park Ave. at 50th St. (378-0219).*

Terra Incognita—An opera for the theater by Maria Irene Fornes and Roberto Sierra. $25. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. *INTAR Theatre, 420 W. 42nd St.(765-1706).*

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Concerts

The Allman Brothers Band—With the years of bad blood, bad side projects, and bad luck behind them apparently for good, these Florida stalwarts keep the fraternal Southern-rock torch aloft and blazing. They wrap up their ten-night reefer-rock-revival meeting 3/18–3/19 and 3/21–3/23 at 8 P.M. *Beacon Theatre, 2124 Broadway, at 74th St. (307-7171). $35.*

The Band—Levon Helm and the boys, still sans Robbie Robertson, hit the boards for one night only (a full tour is promised but not yet mapped out). Thirty years on, the Band mixes country, folk, rock, and blues as effectively and as uniquely as ever. Still an American—North American, anyway—original. 3/20 at 8 P.M. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (307-7171). $40.*

"Derriere Guard Festival"—A sophomorically named retort to avant-garde abstraction, this four-day series' presentations include visual art ("The Young Old Fogeys," 3/20 at 6:30 P.M.) and lectures (Frederick Turner and Tom Wolfe, 3/22 at 2:30 and 6 P.M.). Its musical events: Absolute Ensemble (3/20 at 8:30 P.M.); "Rebel Angels: A Poetry Cabaret" (3/21 at 8:30 P.M.); Ahn Trio (3/23 at 3 P.M.). *The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. (255-5793). Free–$20.*

Ani DiFranco—Even if folk-punk is hardly your "thing" (and how many people's is it, really?), it's hard not to be won over by this joyous, expressive, occasionally daft songstress. 3/19 at 8 P.M. *Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. (307-7171). $15.*

The Herbie Nichols Project—The Jazz Composers Collective presents several of the long-overlooked Nichols's mid-sixties compositions, as well as numbers by Collective saxist Ted Nash. 3/20 at 8 P.M. *Jazz Performance Space, the New School, 55 W. 13th St. (995-1552). $5–$10.*

The Mighty Mighty Bosstones—No Doubt's evil twin brother, this raucous Bostonian septet (octet, if you count nonsinging, nonplaying member Ben Carr, whose onstage job is literally to goof off) has been honing its ska-rock-punk chops long enough to be among the best in the—admittedly limited—field. With Pietasters. 3/24 at 8 P.M. *Webster Hall, 125 E. 11th St. (307-7171). $15.*

Steve Ross and Liliane Montevecchi—The "Cabaret in Concert" series winds up with *Cole Porter in Paris,* a revue for which this pair is particularly suited, what with Ross being one of the world's foremost Porter interpreters and Montevecchi being a native of Paris. The show promises to include perennial faves like "Let's Do It" and "C'est Magnifique." 3/22 at 7:30 and 10 P.M. *92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave., at 92nd St. (996-1100). $25–$30.*

"Sounds of Vietnam"—"An Evening of Vietnamese Song, Music, and Dance" closes out the Alliance Française's Vietnam-celebrating series, 3/19 at 8 P.M. *Florence Gould Hall, French Institute, 55 E. 59th St. (307-7171). $25.*

"This Is My Song"—A gospel extravaganza starring Cissy Houston and Shirley Caesar. 3/18–3/23 at 8 P.M. *The Theatre at Madison Square Garden, Seventh Avenue at 33rd St. (307-7171). $15.50–$37.50.*

Clubland

Acme Underground—The club formerly known as Under Acme, renovated and reborn as New York City's classiest small rock venue. 3/21: Sensitive, catchy pop, courtesy of up and coming trio A Don Piper Situation; vituperative bile, cloaked in honey-sweet melodies, from Fake Brain; the Swarm. *9 Great Jones St., downstairs (420-1934). $.*

Arlene Grocery—The Lower East Side's newish, hippish, and appealingly inexpensive (okay, free) rock and folk venue. 3/21: Ventilators; Succor. 3/22: Big Stupid Guitars; Hooked on Sonics; Echo Drive. 3/25: Neil Cassel. 3/27: Joseph Arthur; New Originals. 3/28: Baby Steps, featuring Joe McGinty, Burt Bacharach's true heir; Primrose Hill. 3/29: Mini-King. *95 Stanton St. (358-1633). $.*

Bottom Line—A top-notch venue—with great sound, good sight lines, and pretty decent fries—given to rock, jazz, and folk artists of all stripes. 3/28: Kenny Rankin. 3/29: Buster Poindexter & His Banshees of Blue. *15 W. 4th St. (228-7880).*

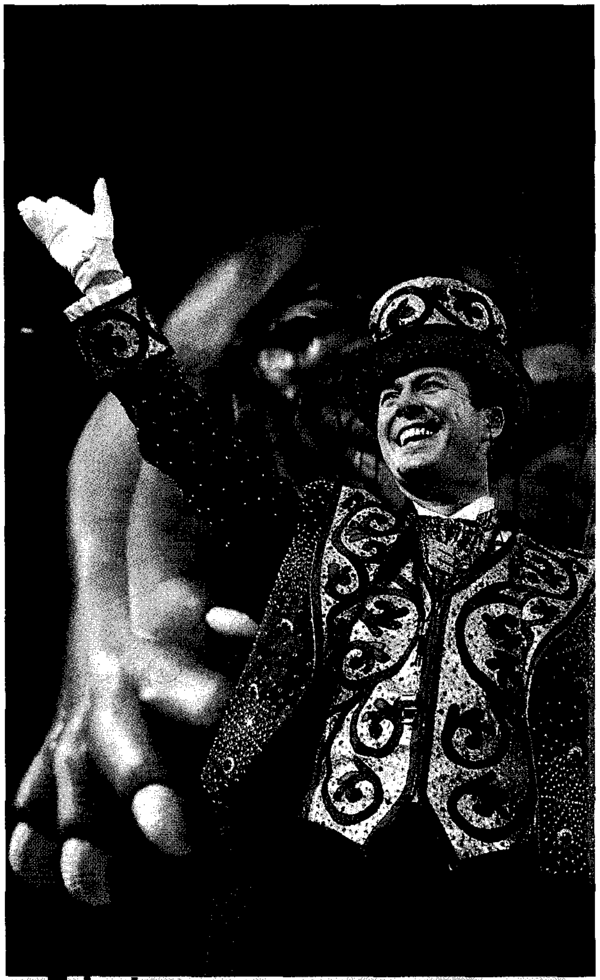
Brownies—Avenue A's divey post-college rock spot, with good tap beers, on-the-rise bands, and the occasional big name trying to keep a low profile. Cozy and congenial, even if you're not pierced. Shows nightly at 9. 3/22: Firewater. 3/23: Servotron; Pansy Division; Hippopotamus. *169 Ave. A, at 11th St. (420-8392). $.*

CBGB & OMFUG—Ground zero of punk's stateside explosion and, twenty years later, still a smoking, flier-strewn pit—in a good way. 3/20: Johnny Skilsaw uses a set of homemade electronic instruments straight out of *Road Warrior* to deliver singalong-friendly pop melodies in a bristling sheath of industrial-strength distortion. *315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052). $.*

Chicago B.L.U.E.S.—A downtown blueserie, comfortably down-home, with living-room couches behind the stage. Dedicated to bringing us the best and brightest from the midwestern blues capital. 3/20: Shemekia Copeland. 3/21–3/22: Guitar Shorty. 3/24: Joe Taino. 3/25: Mark the Harper. 3/26: Flamin' Amy. *73 Eighth Ave., bet. 13th and 14th Sts. (924-9755). $.*

Coney Island High—Originally a glam-trash revival hall, this two-level East Village fun-house now reflects the neighborhood's, uh, cultural diversity, with indie-rock and punk bands sharing the venue with some of the city's wackiest parties, from "Max's Kansas City Wednesdays" to mambo-thon "Havana-Au-Go-Go" (3/22). 3/19: Too Much Joy. 3/20: The Urge. 3/21: Blanks 77. 3/23: Royal Trux. 3/24: Rockers Hi Fi. *15 St. Marks Pl. (674-7959).*

The Cooler—The meatpacking district's subterranean, steel-corridored home to alternative rockers, avant-garde-jazz musicians, and mind-expanding D.J.'s. A sleekly refurbished meat locker with black



Talent

Lord of the Ring

"If *you're the center of attention as the ringmaster, you're* doing something wrong." Sounds counterintuitive, but Eric Michael Gillett is an authority on the subject, so take his word. As singing ringmaster for Ringling Bros., Gillett's been directing audiences' attention to jugglers, clowns, and lion tamers at 500 shows a year for over a decade. His frequent cabaret engagements, which often follow a day's schedule comprising up to three circus performances, "are a chance for me to shine." During Ringling's eighteen-day stint at the Garden, March 20 through April 6, the effervescent tenor stages solo shows at Don't Tell Mama, March 21 and 28, and takes part in the revue *Big City Rhythm,* March 23 and 24 at the Village Gate.

light, moody atmosphere, and a Patti Smith photo. 3/21–3/22: Unwound; Cold Cold Hearts; Blonde Redhead; William Hooker. *416 W. 14th St. (229-0785).*

Fez—Mingus fever and lush *faux*-Moroccan ambience make this the neo-boho place to be on Thursdays, when the mighty Mingus Big Band rocks the house, playing the works of the great, brawling jazz bassist with a freshness and authority rarely seen in jazz today, or ever. Hidden beneath the Time Cafe, Fez takes some ambition and assertiveness to access on a crowded night. Every Wednesday, Fez presents "Stella: An Evening of Big Room Comedy," featuring members of MTV's now-defunct *The State* and other cutups. 3/18: Michelle Malone. 3/21: William Hooker Double Trio; Iconoclast. 3/22: Ellis Paul; Barbara Kessler. 3/24: The Softies; Toki Doki; Aden. 3/25: Larry Loftin; Othello; Eden White. *Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (533-2680).*

Irving Plaza—A midsize bi-level rock venue with moody chandeliers and a sort of haunted-bordello look. It's a bit of a crush near the stage, but there's an amiable bar, 119, right around the corner for a preshow aperitif. "Savoy Sundays" are weekly swingfests of ballroom dancing. 3/18: Erasure. 3/19: The Breeders, catchy and dark as ever. 3/20: Spring Heel Jack: Of instrumental techno outfits, the Chemical Brothers are the most like a traditional rock band; Aphex Twin is pleasant, hummable near-background music; but Spring Heel Jack defies such facile categorization. Blending complex harmonies with dance-friendly beats, they come up with a sonic brew that's as appealing as it is unique. 3/21: Space. 3/22: Status Quo. *17 Irving Pl. (777-6800).*

Knitting Factory—The Disneyland of downtown music, with three floors, two stages, two microbrew-bearing bars and some of the biggest names in now music. Every Monday in March, Vernon Reid presents his latest foray into the rock-jazz-experimental world, "My Science Project." 3/18–3/20: Bela Fleck & the Flecktones, the world's premier purveyors of bluegrass-jazz fusion. 3/21–3/23: Branford Marsalis Trio. 3/24: Vernon Reid. 3/25–3/27: Former Velvet Undergrounder John Cale. *74 Leonard St., bet. Broadway and Church St. (219-3055).*

Life—The former Village Gate, re-imagined as a high-tech supermodel watering hole. 3/22: Competent trip-hop from Britain's Baby Fox. *158 Bleecker St. (420-1999).*

Mercury Lounge—Once a headstone parlor, now one of the city's hippest and most congenial music spots, hosting rock and country artists groomed for the more *au courant* time slots of MTV. 3/18: Danielle's Mouth. 3/19: Ann Klein; Joseph Arthur; Keren Deberg; Smokin' Joe Bonomasso. 3/20: River. 3/21: Marry Me Jane. 3/22: Swingin' Neckbreakers. 3/23: Treble Charger; Swell. 3/25: Royal Crown Revue; Mem Shannon. 3/26: Radar Brothers. *217 E. Houston St. (260-4700).*

Rodeo Bar—A surprisingly untacky honky-tonk in Kips Bay—with gas-station signs, mounted longhorns, and peanuts in the shells. Its urban rockabillies tend to be pierced and dyed, and its stage occasionally hosts greats like Austin legend Ronnie Dawson, Joe Ely, and Otis Blackwell, all past visitors. 3/20: Loup Garou. 3/24: Dan Zanes. *375 Third Ave. at 27th St. (683-6500).*

The Supper Club—A large, grand ballroom with a starry ceiling and challenging acoustics. 3/19: Duncan Sheik; Jill Sobule. 3/26–3/27: Zucchero. *240 W. 47th St. (921-1940).*

Tramps—One of the city's better venues for great roots music and happening indie rock, Tramps eschews high concept for straightforward presentation. Avoid the neck-craning mid-stage column by arriving early. 3/19: Wailing Souls. 3/20: Travis Tritt. 3/21: Moxy Fruvous; the Nields. 3/22: Bob Mould. *51 W. 21st St. (727-7788).*

Wetlands—A groovy club-kid activist hang with neo-hippie atmosphere and far-flung musical

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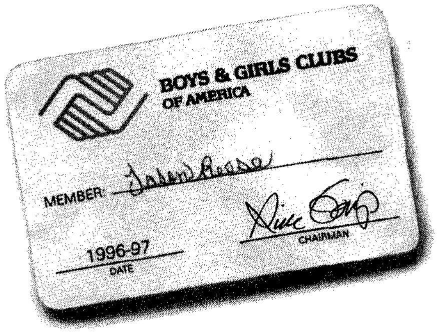

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guests. N.B.: Tuesday night is (Grateful) Dead Night. 3/20: The Jungle Brothers; M.O.P.; Xzibit; Hyenas in the Desert; Punk Barbarians. 3/21: The Scofflaws; Skavoovie; Easy Big Fella. 3/23: The Queers. 3/25–3/26: "Second Sight," with Bob Bralove, Tom Constante, Henry Kaiser, and Bobby Strickland. *161 Hudson St. (966-5244).*

Jazz

Birdland—A roomy bandstand overlooking a classy boîte as suggestive of Big Band–era elegance as the club's name. The jazz restaurant is recently relocated from its uptown outpost. 3/18: Avishai Cohen Sextet. 3/19–3/22: Faddis, Hampton & Heath. 3/23: John Fedchok Big Band. 3/24: Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra. 3/25: Michel Borstlap Trio. 3/26: Eddie Daniels Group. *315 W. 44th St., bet. Eighth and Ninth Aves. (581-3080).*

Blue Note—With first-rate sound and a great view from every seat in the house (the standing-room area at the bar's not bad, either), the "jazz capital of the world" often presents two top-flight artists in one evening. 3/18–3/23: Eddie Palmieri Octet; Poncho Sanchez Latin Jazz Band. 3/24: Judy Niemack & Night Strings. 3/25–3/30: Paquito D'Rivera Quintet; Dave Valentin Quintet. Sets at 9 and 11:30 P.M. *131 W. 3rd St. (475-8592).*

Iridium Room—Merlot, the artfully wacky restaurant across from Lincoln Center, hosts some formidable jazz comers in its cozy basement, along with the occasional legend. One of the latter, the great guitar innovator Les Paul, has moved his Monday-night office hours here after the closing of his longtime haunt, Fat Tuesday's. 3/18–3/23: Mark Whitfield Quartet. 3/25–3/30: Nneena Freelon. Sets at 8:30 and 10:30, Sun.–Thurs., with extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. *44 W. 63rd St., across from Lincoln Center (582-2121).*

Knickerbocker Bar & Grill—A wood-paneled and brass-railed restaurant with Old New York ambience and excellent—occasionally legendary—pianists. 3/19–3/22: Judy Carmichael and Mike Hashim. *33 University Pl. (228-8490).*

Small's—Extremely cozy and open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It's a candlelit basement whose nightly jams start round about 2 A.M.—the perfect time for a post–Village Vanguard visit (it's right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. Every Sunday, the Jazz Composers Forum, followed by the Across Seventh Street Septet. Every Monday, the Jason Lindner Big Band. Thurs.–Sun., shows start at 10 P.M. *183 W. 10th St. (929-7565). $.*

Sweet Basil—An intimate downtown restaurant with good food and high-profile jazz acts. Every Saturday, jazz brunch with Ilhan Ersahin. Every Sunday, Doc Cheatham plays from 2 to 6. Every Monday, it's the Spirit of Life Ensemble. 3/18–3/23: Andrew Cyrille Quintet. 3/25–3/30: Michele Rosewoman Quintessence. Sets at 9 and 11 P.M., with extra sets Fri. and Sat. at 12:30 A.M. *88 Seventh Ave. So., at Bleecker St. (242-1785).*

Village Gate—Jazz and swing dancing nightly, from 10 P.M. to 2:30 A.M. 3/18–3/22 and 3/25–3/29: Manhattan Blues Quartet. 3/23–3/24: "Big City Rhythm," a revue of songs by up and coming musical-theater composer Barry Kleinbort, with Marcia Lewis, Lewis Cleale, Melanie Vaughan, and Ringling Brothers ringmaster Eric Michael Gillett. *240 W. 52nd St. (307-5252).*

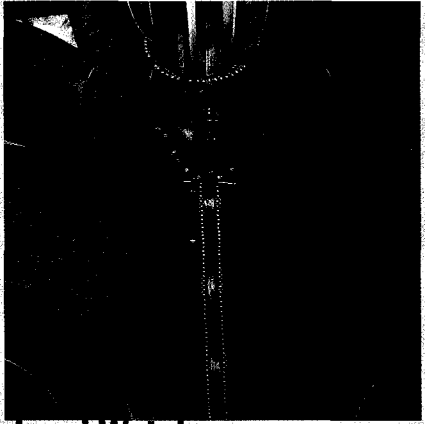
Village Vanguard—Perhaps the world's greatest jazz club, and certainly the most steeped in history, this dark, smokin' institution is revered by fans around the world. Study the photos of jazz icons, dig the curtains Miles Davis once played to, and sneak a glance inside the kitchen, an Algonquin Round Table for the bop age. Mondays, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra swings on. 3/18–3/23: Ron Affif Trio, with Essiett Essiett and Jeff "Tain" Watts. 3/25–3/30: Buster Williams Quartet, with Stefon Harris, Lenny White, and Geri Allen. Sets at 9:30 and 11:30 P.M., with an extra set at 1 A.M. Friday and Saturday. *178 Seventh Ave. So., at W. 11th St. (255-4037). $.*

Zinno—A pretty Italian restaurant with a tiny piano on its awning, Zinno is more dining spot than jazz club, though its musical guests are often pleasant surprises. 3/24–3/29: Hilton Ruiz and Andy McCloud. *126 W. 13th St. (924-5182).*

Comedy

Boston Comedy Club—*Animal House* ambience and, most nights, comedy to match. Sundays: "All Star Comedy." Mondays: Open-mike night. Tuesdays: Eric Deskin hosts "Premium Smoke," a night of—no joke—cigars and comedy. Wednesdays: "Women of Comedy." Thursdays: "Chupacabra Night," with Arnold Acevedo. Fridays and Saturdays, the club promises "the country's top comedians." Shows are at 9:30. *82 W. 3rd St. (477-1000).*

Carolines Comedy Club—In Times Square just down the street from the *Letterman* show. Mondays, "New Talent Night," hosted by Eddie Brill. 3/18: Mike Royce. 3/26: Ward & Wheeler. 3/20–3/23: Tom Rhodes. 3/26: "Comedy Fiesta." *1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (757-4100). $12.50–$18.50, two-drink minimum.*



Neighborhood Watch
Harlem Shuffle

Last year's Rat Pack–fetishizing movie *Swingers*—with its hepcat leading men and swanky-nightspot locations—may have inspired a near epidemic of forties-style lounges downtown, but the sleepy intersection of Lenox Avenue and 125th Street is home to three examples of the genuine article. Walking into the Lenox Lounge (288 Lenox Avenue, between 124th and 125th Streets; 427-0253), you're transported to a forties fantasia of stainless-steel bar fixtures, semicircular banquettes, and podlike lamps that could have come from the pages of a sci-fi comic book. (A patron who's been a regular since the place's late-forties inception says it's never been redecorated.) Perhaps as a result of the profusion of signs posting rules and regulations—from the straightforward MUST BE 25 TO ENTER to the moderately cryptic PROPER ATTIRE REQUIRED: NO SNEAKERS, NO BOOTS—the crowd is usually sparse enough for you to score a booth, even on Friday, Saturday, and Monday nights, when there's live jazz. Around the corner, the fifties-vintage Club Lido (35 West 125th Street; 722-3250) is smaller and less fabulously decorated—its funky white chandeliers, soul-gold-mine jukebox, and wrought-iron railing separating the bar and tables make the Lido more a way-cool neighborhood bar than a preserved bit of history. Once you're buzzed in, you'll find an intimate, friendly crowd and drinks served in gender-specific vessels—little wine glasses for ladies, highballs for gents. Back on Lenox, Casablanca (308 Lenox, between 125th and 126th; 410-5028) is the oldest, most oddly decorated, and most democratic of the three. Sort of a sports bar of yesteryear, it's got spittoons on the floor, mounted deer heads and portraits of thirties boxers on the walls. No buzzer on the door and no dress code mean that the back room's pool table is surrounded by young men in baggy jeans and high-tops. Vivian, the bartender, puts the place's age at 135 years, though more realistic estimates make it closer to 107, and *everyone* has an opinion. "Who cares how old this place is?" one barfly says. "What matters is, I'm here *now.*"

ETHAN SMITH

Photographs by Warren Salowe(3).

Performance

Spring Loaded

Take a good look at Spring Heel Jack here, because you won't see their faces at their Irving Plaza show on March 20: Like most of their colleagues in the electronica biz, the British duo tends to hide behind banks of equipment. But their sound is unlike anyone else's—complex and layered, it's still a blast to dance to.

Comedy Cellar—A physical throwback to sixties Village coffeehouses, this is the late-night subterranean haunt of many of the city's top comics. 3/17–3/23: Greg Giraldo; Dave Attell; Wanda Sykes-Hall; Greer Barnes; Ian Bagg; Vic Hanley. 3/24–3/30: Ray Romano; Mitch Fatel; Gerry Red Wilson; Greer Barnes; Marc Maron. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11 P.M.; Sat. at 9 P.M., 10:45 P.M., and 12:30 A.M.; and Sun–Thurs. at 9 P.M. *117 MacDougal St. (254-3480).*

Comic Strip—Probably the most expertly booked club in the city, this showcase offers an eclectic mix of comedians every night of the week. *1568 Second Ave., bet. 81st and 82nd Sts. (861-9386).*

Dangerfield's—Founded by the respect-deprived comedian two decades ago, this Vegas-style lounge is one of the city's oldest comedy establishments. 3/17–3/23: Al Romero; Rich Ramirez; John Rizzo. 3/24–3/30: Richie Byrne; Joe Mulligan; Nancy Redman. Fri. at 9 and 11:15 P.M.; Sat. at 8 P.M., 10:30 P.M., and 12:30 A.M.; Sun.–Thurs., continuous from 8:45 P.M. Cover is $15 Fri. and Sat.; $12.50 on weeknights; no minimum. *1118 First Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (593-1650).*

Gotham—An elegant, trendy, and, at 3,300 square feet, palatial comedy spot in the Flatiron District. 3/21–3/22: Rich Voss; Coury Kahaney; Marc Maron; Scott Blakeman. Sun., Mon., and Tues. at 8:30 P.M.; Thurs. at 8:30 and 11 P.M.; Fri. and Sat. at 9 and 11:30 P.M. Cover is $12 plus two-drink minimum Fri. and Sat., $8 on weeknights. *34 W. 22nd St. (367-9000).*

Luna Lounge—Mondays, it's "The Show Formerly Known As Rebar," where hip, alternative-minded comedians from MTV's *The State* and elsewhere try out their riskier, stranger material. Shows at 8. *171 Ludlow St., at Houston. (260-2323).*

Stand-up New York—Robin Williams is known to drop by here unannounced to warm up for his *Letterman* appearances. Mondays, it's Sunda Croonquist and the Femmes Fatales. Every Tuesday in March, "The Big Show," with Kevin Downey Jr., Leighann Lord, and Selected Hilarity. 3/26: "The First HIV-Positive Comedy Competition," for HIV-positive stand-up comics. Sun.–Thurs. at 7; Fri. at 7, 9, and 11 P.M.; Sat. at 7, 9:30, and 11:30 P.M. *236 W. 78th St. (595-0850). $7–$12.*

Cabaret

Algonquin Hotel—Through April 5, Julie Wilson. Tues.–Sat. at 9 (dinner at 7); Fri.–Sat. also at 11:30 (supper at 10:30). $30; $15 minimum. *59 W. 44th St. (840-6800).*

Cafe Carlyle—The fabulous Eartha Kitt's latest run lasts through 3/22. Starting 3/25, Barbara Cook takes over. Tues.–Sat. at 8:45 and 10:45 P.M. $45; no minimum. *Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600).*

Danny's Skylight Room—3/25–3/26: Laurie Krauz. 3/28: Blossom Dearie begins an extended run. $6–$15, plus $10 minimum. *346 W. 46th St. (265-8130).*

Don't Tell Mama—3/21 and 3/28, Barnum & Bailey ringmaster Eric Michael Gillett, performing his one-man show, "Wherever Love Takes Me." $6–$12; two-drink minimum. *343 W. 46th St. (757-0788).*

Dutch Weisman's "Sinners"—Like Weisman's previous revue, "Winter Follies," "Sinners" is replete with old-time attractions like showgirls and low comedy. Wednesday and Thursday at 9 P.M.; Friday and Saturday at 11, with live music and dancing after the show. *108 W. 18th St. (645-7045). $30.*

Maxim's—Midtown's monument to hefty art-nouveau interior design and hefty French-bistro fare. 3/19–3/22: Betty Buckley. $30 cover. *680 Madison Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (751-5111).*

Rainbow and Stars—Through 3/22: Karen Mason, an understudy for the role of Norma Desmond in *Sunset Boulevard*. Sunday nights, Rainbow hosts a rotating lineup of songwriters. 3/23: Debbie Gravitte, "MGM, Menken, and More." $25 cover. Tues.–Sat. at 8:30 P.M.; Fri. and Sat. at 11 P.M.; dinner required at early shows. *30 Rockefeller Plaza, 65th floor (632-5000).*

Sardi's—The Manhattan Theatre Club puts on its all-original, NYC-fêting revue, "Cabaret '97," 3/20–3/29. Thurs.–Sat., in the Belasco Room. $18 cover; two-drink minimum. *234 W. 44th St. (221-8444).*

Ed Sullivan's—Tucked practically inside the Ed Sullivan Theater, the old-man bar turned chichi dining spot offers swing jazz nightly and a waiter who looks just like the place's namesake. Every Friday, Sullivan's is home to the Harlem All-Stars. 3/20: The Flying Neutrinos. 3/22: The Blues Jumpers. 3/25–3/26: The Ed Swanston Trio. No cover; two-drink minimum Fri. and Sat. *1697 Broadway, bet. 53rd and 54th Sts. (541-1697).*

Bars

Howard Johnson's—The last vestige of the real Times Square has the perfect seedy cocktail lounge secreted in the back. The biggest surprise about the clientele isn't its touristy makeup; it's how small it is. Shouldn't this, the archetype for simu-diners like Ellen's Stardust, be the neighborhood's biggest attraction? Well, fewer of them means more room for us, so complaints aren't really in order. *1551 Broadway, at 46th St. (354-1445).*

The Room—This candlelit SoHo joint suffers from a perpetual if mild identity crisis—it can't decide whether it's a lounge, an indie-rock hang, a reclaimed industrial space, or just a regular neighborhood bar. But the unintimidating crowd, generally good music, and truly eclectic beer selection make the Room an oasis of normalcy. *144 Sullivan St., bet. Prince and Houston Sts. (477-2102).*

The View Lounge—What can you say about a rotating bar hundreds of feet above Times Square? In spite of—or because of—its utterly impersonal ambience, it's a classic, and well worth the exorbitantly high prices. One of the rare venues where motion sickness may set in before you catch a cab home. *Marriott Marquis, 1535 Broadway, at 45th St., forty-eighth floor (398-1900).*

Von—Understated, cozy décor; a choice selection of Belgian and English beers; and slammin' D.J.'s give Von an intimacy that appeals to quasi-boho publishing types and citizens of the hip-hop nation alike. *3 Bleecker St. (473-3039).*

Windows on the World—The "Greatest Bar on Earth" (or the loftiest, anyway) reanimates itself with a new Saturday-night theme-party series. 3/22: A 25th-anniversary party for WNEW D.J. Carol Miller, with clowns, jugglers, knife swallowers—just the usual night-on-the-town fare. Every Thursday and Friday in March, the nine-piece Rhythm Nation plays R&B. *1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (524-7000).*

Photograph by Steve Double.

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Manhattan

Lower New York

Alison on Dominick—An impeccably turned-out room with blue banquettes and tender lighting. Perfectionist owner Alison Becker Hurt makes sure that all is well. *38 Dominick St., nr. Hudson St. (727-1188). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Baluchi's—Indian fare served in a cozy, comfortable atmosphere in the center of SoHo. Have a seat on a patchwork chair amid fantastic imported treasures. *193 Spring St., bet. Thompson and Sullivan Sts. (226-2828). Also, 1565 Second Ave., nr. 81st St. (288-4810). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Bo Ky—This very basic Chinatown spot has been dishing up delicious noodle soups to the neighborhood since before the Mees and Tang Tangs sprouted uptown. Expect to share a table. *80 Bayard St. (406-2292). (I) ($).*

Chanterelle—Spare and elegant, virtually religious, this TriBeCa restaurant is a favorite among those who want a Big Deal. Chef David Waltuck runs a grand kitchen—seafood sausage, cold fruit soups, and anything he does with truffles in season. Wife Karen runs the front room with class and warmth. *2 Harrison St., at Hudson St. (966-6960). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

The Cub Room—Fighting back from the scorching bar scene his restaurant became last summer, chef-owner Henry Meer (from Lutèce)—doing penance for the butter and cream of the past—is dishing up contemporary American fare to an impossibly diverse crowd. Yes, that was Ethan Hawke. *131 Sullivan St., at Prince St. (677-4100). (M) AE only.*

Ecco—A beacon in the wilderness that is Chambers Street. Old-world charm and an excellent seasonal antipasto offering. The very cozy narrow booths line the east wall, and tile floors take you back to the Gilded Age. *124 Chambers St., nr. Sixth Ave. (227-7074). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

F.illi Ponte Ristorante—A former longshoremen's hotel, newly renovated with a spectacular view of the Hudson River and New Jersey beyond. Join the throng—made men and gawking hangers-on—for fine Italian fare. *39 Desbrosses St. (226-4621). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Hudson River Club—From this Frank Lloyd Wright–ish dining room in the World Financial Center, you can see the Statue of Liberty. But then, the Hudson River figures prominently so many ways here. The emphasis is on Hudson River Valley cuisine, with specialties like venison prosciutto, squash soup, roast pheasant, and Catskill Mountains trout. *4 World Financial Ctr. (786-1500). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Ground Rules:

Here lie a few hundred of the city's more noteworthy restaurants, some *New York* advertisers among them. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: (E) = expensive, $35 and over per place; (M) = moderate, $15–$30 per place; (I) = inexpensive, $15 and under per place. Following each listing there is also a code indicating acceptable methods of payment: ($) = cash only, AE = American Express, CB = Carte Blanche, DC = Diners Club, DS = Discover, M = MasterCard, TM = Transmedia, V = Visa. "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted charge/credit card.

Kelley and Ping—The type of funky, lofty noodle house that could only exist—and thrive—in SoHo. *127 Greene St., nr. Prince St. (228-1212). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

L'Ecole—This modern French bistro is unique in that its chefs are students from the French Culinary Institute. Special three- and five-course menus are available, so come with either an empty stomach or a doggie bag. Private parties. Closed Sundays. *462 Broadway, at Grand St. (219-3300). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Montrachet—Owner Drew Nieporent now has five places in New York, including Nobu, Layla, Zeppole at the TriBakery and Tribeca Grill, and another in San Francisco. But this is his baby—attractive, lively, and one of the first truly great restaurants in lower Manhattan. There's lunch on Fridays—try the Roquefort-and-pear salad—and dinner Monday through Saturday. *239 W. Broadway, nr. White St. (219-2777). (E) AE only.*

Morton's of Chicago—The second New York location of the national steakhouse chain. Portions are huge, quality is consistent, and, in case you haven't noticed, beef is back. *90 West St. (732-5665). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Odeon—Downtown has fallen in love all over again with this TriBeCa institution. The bar's out of Dashiell Hammett, and the dining room gets everyone from the banker, his wife, and their 2-year-old to movie stars, artists, and assorted big-deal celebrities. *145 W. Broadway, nr. Thomas St. (233-0507). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted two Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *109 Spring St. (274-8883). Also, 240 Columbus Ave., at 71st St. (769-3988). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Tennessee Mountain—This 1807 landmark farmhouse serves up huge portions of smoked chicken and grilled ribs, plus regional appetizers and desserts. Bring those breath mints and Handi-Wipes for all-you-can-eat on Monday night. *143 Spring St. (431-3993). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Below 14th Street, East

Asti—This 70-year-old Village mainstay epitomizes the concept of the singing waiter. Professional opera singers perform arias and show tunes while

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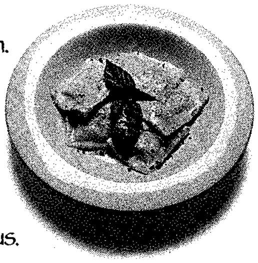

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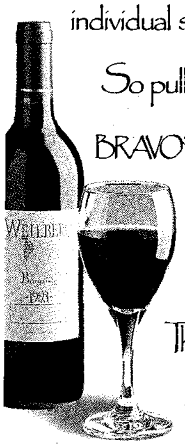

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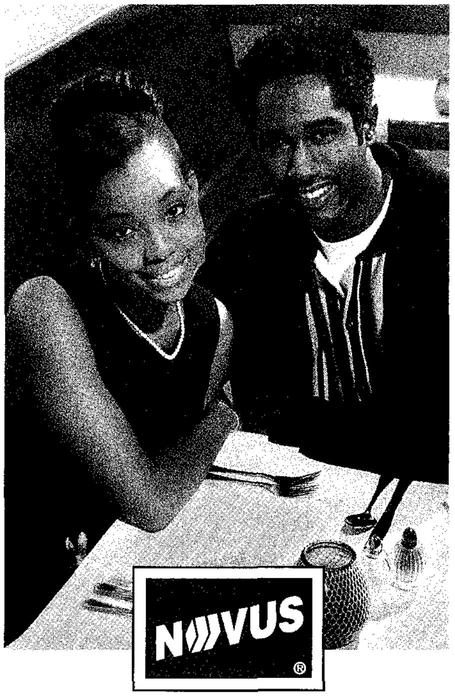

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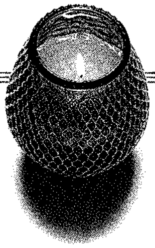

This month's list

Brooklyn Diner USA
212 W. 57th Street
(212)977-1957

Ciccio & Tony's
320 Amsterdam Avenue
(212)595-0500

Jimmy Sung's Restaurant
219 E. 44th Street
(212)682-5678

Laurita's Café Soul
311 Church Street
(212)941-0202

Merchantile Grill
126 Pearl Street
(212)482-1221

Redeye Grill
890 Seventh Avenue
(212)541-9000

Riodizio
417 Lafayette Street
(212)529-1313

Soul Café
444 West 42nd Street
(212)244-7685

Stage Deli
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(212)245-7850

Triplets Roumanian Steakhouse
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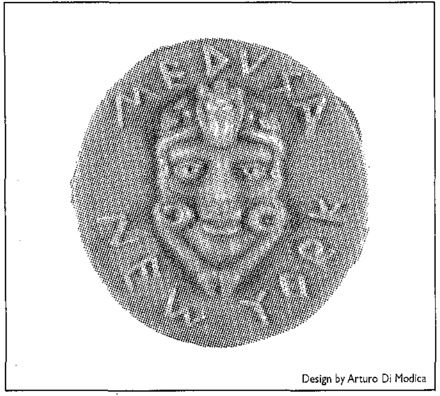

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waiters manage to carry a tune *and* serve orders of seafood fra diavolo, Maine lobsters, and Black Angus steak. *13 E. 12th St. (741-9105). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Casanis—A shrine to French barroom bric-a-brac in the basement. A bistro that is as Paris was in the sixties. Yes, that was Jean-Paul Belmondo. *54 E. 1st St. (777-1589). (M) ($).*

Gotham Bar & Grill—Alfred Portale's kitchen, with its architectural ingenuity and whimsical creativity, serves as a finishing school for the city's all-star chefs before they launch their own careers. This awesome dining temple has long been a staple. *12 E. 12th St. (620-4020). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Haveli—Haveli distinguishes itself from the Sixth Street strip, for its food as much as its upscale decor. Possibly the only East Village restaurant with an *intentionally* shattered windowpane. *100 Second Ave., nr. 6th St. (982-0533). (I–M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Miracle Grill—This is what Bobby Flay did before Mesa Grill, and some regulars still prefer the low-key, casual atmosphere and the lively garden out back. The grilled vegetable plate surpasses most. *112 First Ave., nr. 7th St. (254-2353). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Mirezi—This sleekly designed boîte features a sake bar and specialty Asian cocktails as well as traditional Korean and Asian dishes, such as bibimbap and barbecued spareribs, with the type of haute twist that appeals to the targeted young, trendy crowd. *59 Fifth Ave. (242-9708). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Osso Buco—Popular Italian restaurant on a much-traveled Village corridor serving family-style portions of the eponymous house specialty, Caesar salad, fried calamari, and T-bone steak. *88 University Pl., nr. 11th St. (645-4525). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Three of Cups—Proving that the East Village has room enough for another wood-burning oven pizza parlor besides Two Boots. The "mickey," a charred spud dripping with butter, shouldn't be missed. *83 First Ave., at 5th St. (388-0059). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Below 14th Street, West

Andalousia—This relatively undiscovered Village Moroccan rightly prides itself on its roster of tagines and couscous specials. B'stilla is a standout. *28 Cornelia St. (929-3693). (I) MC, V.*

Bar Pitti—This Tuscan trattoria, with tables spilling out onto the sidewalk, has simpler, cheaper food than Da Silvano next door, but it's just as good a spot to sip an espresso and watch the Village foot traffic. Great fettunta. *268 Sixth Ave., nr. Bleecker St. (982-3300). (I–M) ($).*

Blue Note Jazz Club and Restaurant—Should you develop an appetite while listening to some of the world's best jazz acts, this famous Village club offers a full menu, with such Continental fare as shrimp with scallops and salmon with champagne sauce. Open for brunch, too. *131 W. 3rd St. (475-8592). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Greenwich Cafe—This Village café, with its plush antique wing chairs and rococo mirrors, has a loungy feel and is open around the clock with a menu that crosses every border. Representative items include crab cakes with lobster sauce and fennel tempura, grilled salmon with jasmine rice, and a veggie burger with minted couscous. No cover for the jazz brunch. *75 Greenwich Ave. (255-5489). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Gus' Place—This welcoming Greek taverna in the West Village offers authentic Mediterranean meze and entrées; a fireplace increases the coziness quotient. The orzo with Gulf shrimp and the lamb-shank stifado are house specialties. *149 Waverly Pl. (645-8511). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Le Zoo—The newest West Village scene, with lots of Left Bank ambience. The menu sticks to standards like poulet grand mère, saumon en croute, and cassolette. *314 W. 11th St. (620-0393). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Rincon de España—Spanish restaurant offering excellent paella and seafood; very small and intimate. *226 Thompson St. (260-4950). (I) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Tio Pepe—A reliably festive spot for classic Mexican and Spanish fare, from tapas to paella Valenciana, with an enclosed sidewalk café and skylit garden room. *168 W. 4th St. (242-9338). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Tsunami—This contemporary Japanese restaurant frequented by neighboring NYU students and sushiphiles boasts the city's only revolving "water canal" sushi bar, with sushi boats that float by diners like a luggage carousel. The assortment of rolls includes spicy tuna, spider, and tropical, and the environment, thanks to the water theme, is soothing and serene. *70 W. 3rd St (475-7770). (I) AE, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Villa Mosconi—Peter Mosconi and his brood offer a menu as reliable as traditional Italian home cooking. Find this old-world anachronism in the heart of Greenwich Village. *69 MacDougal St. (673-0390). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Ye Waverly Inn—This shrine to Colonial times offers American standards like chicken potpie, baked peasant meatloaf, Indian pudding, and hot mulled wine. The room in the landmark building, dated to 1844, has *three* working fireplaces, and is decorated, in true Laura Ashley fashion, with lace curtains and floral wallpaper. *16 Bank St. (929-4377). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, East Side

Alva—Bare lightbulbs evoke Thomas Edison, the namesake of this sleek spot invented by Charles Palmer and designer Fernando Saralegui, but the food is all very twentieth-century: crispy shrimp cocktail, cod-and-salmon cakes, veal stew, an exciting cheese course. *36 E. 22nd St. (228-4399). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

An American Place—This venerable midtown spot is to New York as Chez Panisse is to Berkeley. With his eclectic American menu, Larry Forgione made the national cuisine interesting again. *2 Park Ave., at 32nd St. (684-2122). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Back Porch—Ideal spot for Murray Hill residents to meet for drinks alfresco and southwestern-flavored fare. Sit outdoors as long as the weather holds. *488 Third Ave., at 33rd St. (685-3828). (I) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Bambou—There's a new flavor on East 14th Street: ambitiously nouvelle renderings of Caribbean cuisine,

In Print **Brooklyn-based cooking teacher and author Michele Scicolone spent 25 years researching and simplifying regional Italian recipes like risotto with apples and spaghetti with rubies (chopped beets, actually)—making her first cookbook, *A Fresh Taste of Italy* (Broadway Books; $30), not just an inspired collection of dishes but a travelogue filled with memories and culinary vignettes.**

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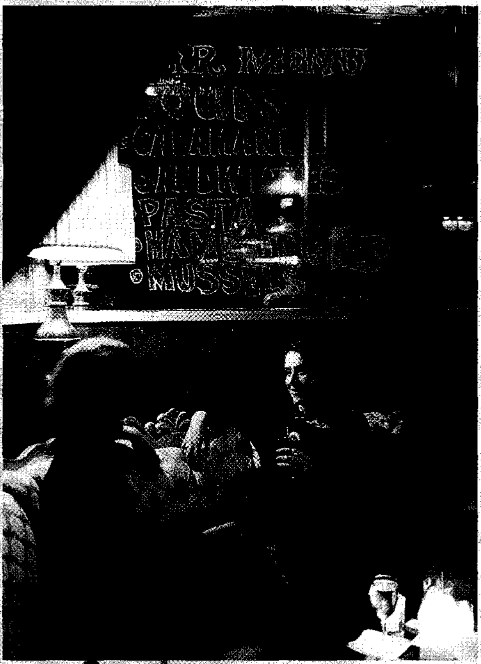
MICHELE SCICOLONE

Photograph by Steven Freeman.



Opening Nine Lives

Bar Nine may be the newest of the loungy restaurants descending on Hell's Kitchen, but the grandmotherly sofas, rough-hewn walls, and antique ships' searchlights over the bar all contribute to a been-here-forever mood. (807 Ninth Avenue, near 53rd Street.)

like ackee-and-callaloo tart with scotch-bonnet-and-tomato salsa, and coconut-curry lobster with banana-lentil salad. The relaxing, tropical dining room and bar have already attracted such bold-faced names and beautiful faces as Harry Belafonte, Marisa Tomei, Iman, and Roshumba. *243 E. 14th St. (358-0012). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Bobby O's Steakhouse—Celebrity owner Patrick Swayze and partner Bobby Ochs specialize in steaks—sirloin, filet mignon, and porterhouse—at a very affordable $18.50, plus lobster and prime rib. To make for a more peaceful dining experience, the boisterous bar area is partitioned off with cherrywood paneling. *560 Third Ave., at 37th St. (681-0400). (I–M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Bolo—There's nothing discreet about Bobby Flay's neo-Spanish cooking. In a room that reminds you of Gaudí by way of Pee-wee Herman, Flay turns out fiery, bold dishes like baby clams in green onion broth as well as paella with curried shellfish and chicken. *23 E. 22nd St. (228-2200). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Campagna—The *Late Show With David Letterman* crowd is at one table, Time Warner honchos are at another, and isn't that . . . ? Despite the frenzy of having become Media Central, this smart little trattoria serves some of the most satisfying Italian food in Manhattan. Chef Mark Straussman is to thank for dishes like rabbit in polenta, gnocchi with wild mushrooms and truffle oil, and grilled tuna with beets. *24 E. 21st St. (460-0900). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

El Parador Cafe—Very possibly the oldest Mexican restaurant in New York City, this comfortable, old-world establishment is known for its enormous selection of premium tequilas and traditional dishes like mole poblano, carnitas, and duck with cuipotle glaze. *325 E. 34th St. (679-6812). (M) MC, TM, V.*

Gramercy Tavern—As a second act to Danny Meyer's much-loved Union Square Cafe, this Flatiron American newcomer doesn't disappoint. The main dining room manages to be both impressive and cozy, the service superlative, and Tom Colicchio's food inspired. For lesser appetites and lower budgets, the bar menu in the Tavern Room is equally delicious. Orchestrate your own cheese course and sample the varied selection of wines by the glass. *42 E. 20th St. (477-0777). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Granville—Besides adhering to the current vogue for clubby, cigar-friendly hangouts, this Gramercy restaurant and lounge offers modern takes on American cuisine—lobster medallions with oxtail risotto, for instance. And the D.J. booth upstairs provides an alternative to the old-English-gent vibe. *40 E. 20th St. (253-9088). (M) AE, MC, V.*

i Trulli—A Southern Italian restaurant that aims to prove that tomato sauce is not crucial for survival, i Trulli succeeds with tasty focaccia, homemade sausage, tripe, and venison. In warm weather, the garden is a perfect midtown escape. *122 E. 27th St. (481-7372). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Les Halles—Even though it hasn't been around forever, this utterly perfect re-creation of a Left Bank bistro seems like it has. This is the place to come for onion soup, steak frites, celeri rémoulade, crème caramel—that sort of thing. *411 Park Ave. So., bet. 28th and 29th Sts. (679-4111). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Mesa Grill—Chef Bobby Flay believes in big flavors and big portions. He developed his own signature style, borrowing from the flavors and ingredients of the American Southwest. Loud, stylish, and loads of fun. Great quesadillas. *102 Fifth Ave., nr. 16th St. (807-7400). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Rossini's—This elegant split-level restaurant offers Northern Italian cuisine and live music nightly. Chef Gilberto specializes in seafood, and private parties are easily accommodated. *108 E. 38th St. (683-0135). (E) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Union Square Cafe—The careful service, human-scale dining rooms, and peerless California café cuisine make this one of the best restaurants in the city. *21 E. 16th St. (243-4020). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, West Side

Bright Food Shop—A Chelsea luncheonette with an innovative, healthy Mexican menu with Asian influences. Excellent desserts and a great selection of Mexican fruit sodas. *216 Eighth Ave., at 21st St. (243-4433). (I–M) ($).*

Bryant Park Grill—This long-awaited restaurant on the edge of the city's prettiest pocket park has been mobbed from day one. Go at an off-hour for Caesar salad, New York steak, soft-shell crabs, and scallion pancakes. *40th St., between Fifth and Sixth Aves. (840-6500). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Caffe Bondí Ristorante—Popular with the photographers who work in the Flatiron district and foodies from all over. Specializes in Sicilian dishes like conca d'oro, pasta con sarde, and rabbit stew. Try the weekend brunch and the occasional historical dinner. *7 W. 20th St. (691-8136). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Da Umberto—Low-key Chelsea façade belies the extraordinary Italian offerings inside. Getting a table is no small task, especially in the evening. This is a Euro–New York crossroads. A mad cacophony of laughter and chatter in Brooklynese and Roman. Don't dress down. *107 W. 17th St. (989-0303). (E) AE only.*

Luma—Luma used to be famous for its nutritional asceticism: no meat, no fat, no fun. Now the only restriction is the chef's efforts to use organic ingredients. Global influences abound, from the Spanish-mackerel seviche to the shrimp satay with

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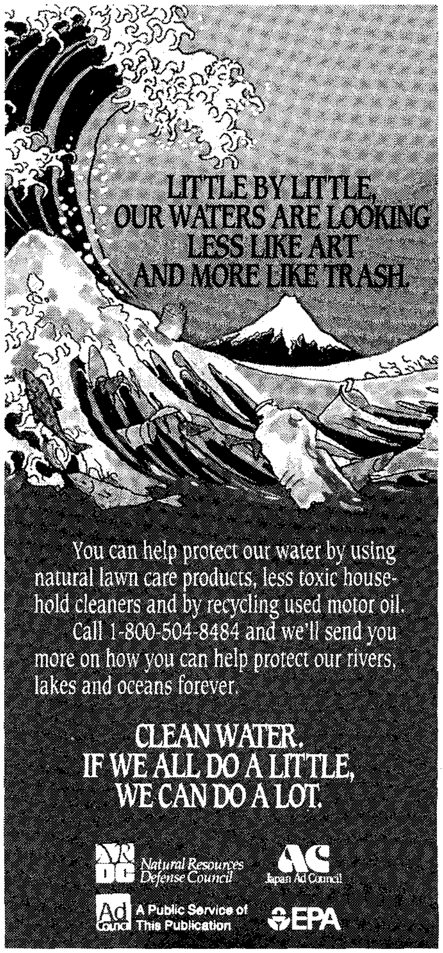

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caramelized mango. *200 Ninth Ave., at 22nd St. (633-8033). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Moran's—Charming and timeless New York City tavern that's been around for 38 years. Six fireplaces and comfort food like steak, seafood, and pasta make this a warm and cozy Chelsea haven. *146 Tenth Ave., at 19th St. (627-3032). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Simply Pasta—Perfectly situated for pretheater, this moderately-priced Northern Italian restaurant offers such dependable, fresh fare as Caesar salad, osso buco, and tirami su. *120 W. 41st St. (391-0805). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

37th Street Hideaway—Restaurant and supper club in the former home of John Drew Barrymore. Dance to live music—this month, it's Nina Murani and her trio—between courses of Northern Italian fare, best sampled on the prix fixe lunch and dinner menus. Free parking available after five; closed Sunday. *32 W. 37th St. (947-8940). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

World Yacht—Take an out-of-town visitor to see the sights—all of them—over dinner. The luxury yacht boards at six, and sails from seven until ten. *Pier 81, W. 41st St. and the Hudson River (630-8100). (E) AE, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, East Side

Café Centro—A big, shiny brasserie-cum-café in the lobby of the MetLife Building; there's inventive cooking going on here, and the joint is as fun and good as non-expensive midtown gets. In the loud little Beer Bar, get one of the best hamburgers in town. Closed Sunday. *200 Park Ave., 45th St. at Vanderbilt Ave. (818-1222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Charlton's—A traditional American steakhouse with dark wood, white tablecloths, and all the expected accoutrements. Besides beef, there are crabcakes, lamb chops, and homemade soups, plus an extensive list of wine and beer. *922 Third Ave., nr. 55th St. (688-4646). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Divine Bar—This East Side establishment is all things to all people: a cigar bar, a wine bar, a tapas lounge, and a casual, couch-filled living room where local office workers can unwind. The eclectic menu includes smoked-duck breast bruschetta and chocolate fondue with fruit. *244 E. 51st St. (319-9463). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Domingo—Josefina Howard's foray into Spanish cooking is a homecoming of sorts. Downstairs there's a Castilian-style tapas bar; upstairs, a more traditional dining room with dramatic skylights. Drop in for churros y chocolate, or make a full meal of the regional Spanish specialties. *209 E. 49th St. (826-8154). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Fresco—It's a family affair: The Scottos, including broadcasting star Rosanna, have created a room where you'll find stars at your feet and hearty portions of modern Tuscan fare (rich homemade pasta, thin and crispy grilled pizza, chops and fish) on the table. *34 E. 52nd St. (935-3434). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Giambelli 50th Ristorante—Elegant Northern Italian fare served in a warm and cozy atmosphere. The chef imports esoteric varieties of pasta from Italy to prepare his specialties; the fish and meat dishes are as carefully considered. *46 E. 50th St. (688-2760). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Lespinasse—Marie Antoinette, where are you? This ultra-formal dining room in the St. Regis Hotel—think Versailles and you get the rococo drift—is where you'll find Gray Kunz's inventive Franco-Oriental cooking. The $46 prix fixe at lunch is a gentle introduction to exactly what wonders chef Kunz can perform. *2 E. 55th St., in the St. Regis Hotel (753-4500). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Lutèce—The name is still synonymous with dishes like Dover sole, cassoulet, and rack of lamb. After three decades of defining traditional French cuisine, master chef André Soltner ceded the reins to relative innovator Eberhard Müller. The kitchen still astonishes. *249 E. 50th St. (752-2225). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Morton's of Chicago—This midwestern import has taken Manhattan by storm, winning converts with its tender double porterhouse and men's club charm. Hard to believe it's a chain. *551 Fifth Ave., at 45th St. (972-3315). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Naples Ristorante e Pizzeria—This new, sprawling Italian restaurant and carry-out in the MetLife building serves authentic Neapolitan cuisine, including excellent thin-crust pizzas, baked to order by experienced pizza masters imported directly from Italy. Also try the twice-baked sandwiches and the wide array of wines by the glass. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (972-7001). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Shinbashi—Authentic Japanese cuisine, including tempura, sukiyaki, teriyaki, and sushi, served in elegant surroundings. *280 Park Ave., at 48th St. (661-3915). Also, Shinbashi-an, 141 E. 48th St. (752-0505). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Shinbashi-an—Sophisticated midtown spot for Japanese food, with specialties including tempura, sukiyaki, shabu shabu, and sushi in a sleekly modern setting. Closed Saturday. *141 E. 48th St. (752-0505). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Smith & Wollensky—Carnivores keep this popular steakhouse jumping. All wood and brass, it has the look of a private men's club, the noise of a locker room, and a serious wine cellar. *Third Ave. at 49th St. (753-1530). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Tatou—Gilded-plaster satyrs, bubble-toting cherubs, jazz onstage, and American-influenced French cuisine. Executive chef Michel Bourdeaux has gussied up the menu with dishes like Caribbean-style grilled swordfish on spinach, and cabbage stuffed with mushroom and roasted squab. During the more sedate lunch hour, dine to the background music of harp or a classical trio. *151 E. 50th St. (753-1144). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Tropica—Always packed at lunch, but squeeze in at the bar and order the salmon and a glass of tropical iced tea. The dining room serves the most imaginative seafood in town, but be sure to go on a weekday—the restaurant, located in the lobby of the MetLife Building, is closed Saturday and Sunday. *200 Park Ave., nr. 45th St. (867-6767). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Yan Van Van—This convenient pit stop for commuters and midtown office workers offers nouvelle Asian cuisine, with specialties like shabu shabu and barbecue cooked on a unique smoke-free induction-heat table. The brick and stucco design is intended to represent Silk Road culture. Pretheater menu available, and jackets are required for dinner. *Vanderbilt Ave. bet. 43rd St. and 44th Sts. (973-0461). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, West Side

American Festival Cafe—Lunch inside this glamorized eatery with rotating American folk art. Skaters in winter and a garden in the summer and early fall make for fierce window-seat competition. *Rockefeller Plaza, 20 W. 50th St. (332-7620). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Bello—Locals flock here for generous portions of well-priced Northern Italian served in a casually elegant atmosphere. Free parking from four till closing. *863 Ninth Ave., at 56th St. (246-6773). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

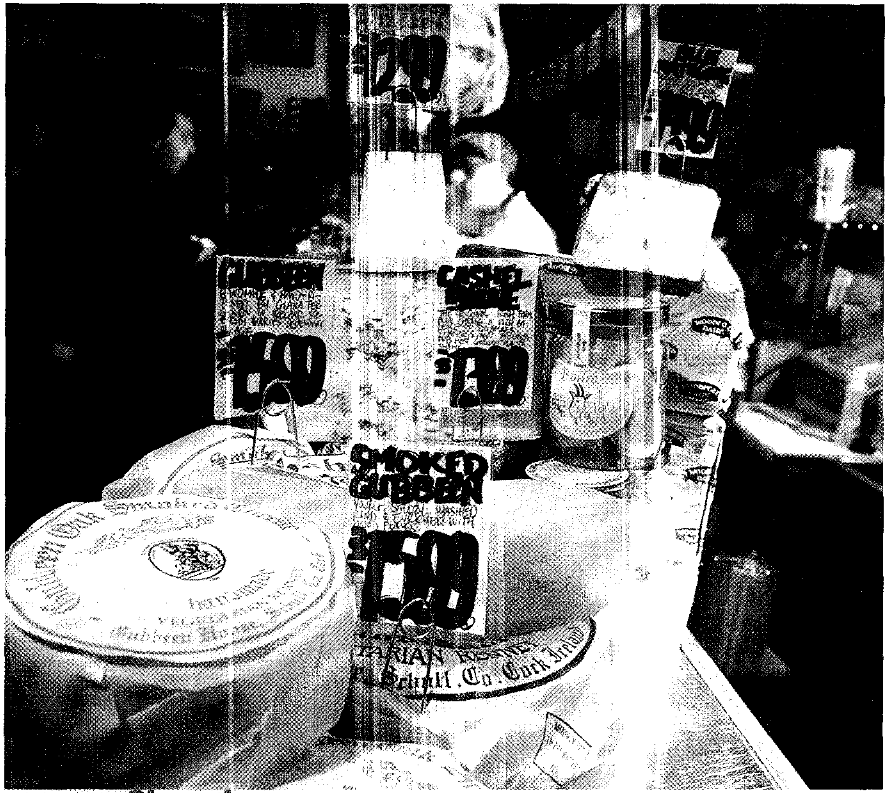
Bombay Palace—This newly refurbished, elegant Indian restaurant has been serving its refined versions of tandoori lobster, lamb kandhari, and chicken kashmiri to a midtown office crowd for years. Try the excellent selection of Indian breads. *30 W. 52nd St. (541-7777). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Broadway Grill—A good place to remember for pretheater, with a good selection of thin-crust pizzas, pastas, and grilled fish and meat. *Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza Hotel, 49th St. at Broadway (315-6161). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Broadway Joe—Located in a townhouse on Restaurant Row, this steakhouse serves a fourteen-ounce prime rib but also delivers fresh seafood and pasta for the omnivore. Hirschfeld caricatures cover the walls, so come find your NINAS while you dine. Discount dinner parking. Private parties. *315 W. 46th St. (246-6513). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Century Cafe—Theater-district cafe popular among actors and fans alike, with a prix fixe menu and American fare like filet mignon and grilled salmon. *132 W. 43rd St. (398-1988). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Restaurant Charlotte—Offers a refuge from the hubbub and hustle of Times Square. Consistent American cuisine, from grilled sirloin and mashed potatoes to mushroom-dusted cod, in a postmodern



Shopping

Cheese That Stands Alone

Boutique cheesemonger Rob Kaufelt of Murray's Cheese Shop has secured, for the first time, a shipment of Irish farmhouse cheeses. Expert and 'Cheese Primer' author Steven Jenkins is a big fan of the Gorgonzola-like Cashel Blue, the country's only blue cheese made from raw cow's milk, and Gubbeen, a nutty brine-washed wheel from County Cork. (257 Bleecker Street.)

setting. *145 W. 44th St., in the Millennium Broadway (789-7508). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Christer's—Famous for its spectacular selection of salmon, this Scandinavian-inspired restaurant, designed by David Rockwell to resemble a colorful, cozy mountain lodge, is a great choice for contemporary renditions of seafood. Open Sundays. *145 W. 55th St. (974-7224). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Ciao Europa—Midtown Italian in an elegant, castle-like setting, with ceiling-high murals painted in 1937. Regulars swear by the pasta and desserts. *63 W. 54th St. (247-1200). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Cité—An extravagant French steakhouse, marble and pewter with blazing chandeliers, and a more affordable grill next door. *120 W. 51st St. (956-7100). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Ed Sullivan's—This restaurant's nostalgic location in the landmarked Ed Sullivan Theater informs its classic style, with "Hollywood" booths, 30-foot ceilings, and mahogany bars. The American menu—well-priced as a $21.95 pretheater prix fixe—offers such hearty fare as surf-and-turf and pan-seared scallops with truffle mashed potatoes. Live jazz and blues performed nightly. *1697 Broadway, nr. 53rd St. (541-1697). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Ellen's Stardust Diner—A tribute to that archetype of mid-century American gastronomy, this themey diner serves up iconic nourishment, from "Mom's meatloaf platter" to "grilled chicken T-bird" salad. *1650 Broadway, at 51st St. (956-5151). (I) AE, DC, MC.*

"44"—Still the first stop for the officers of the Condé Nast empire. Deeply plush, windowless décor feels like the center of the Earth. Given the theatricality, surprisingly terrific food. *44 W. 44th St., in the Royalton (944-8844). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Frankie and Johnnie's Steakhouse—The oldest speakeasy in the city. In the same location in the theater district since 1926. Try the steaks and the chops. Yes, that was Tom Selleck. *269 W. 45th St. (997-9494). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Java Shop—A full-service coffee shop, offering take-out and waiter service. The American menu includes Belgian waffles, oven-baked fried chicken, salads, and breakfast served all day long. Charles Morris Mount created a sleek, contemporary design, with a java-influenced color scheme. *1611 Broadway, at 49th St. (246-1960). (I) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Johnnie's—This small, old-world Italian restaurant has been a midtown fixture for over three and a half decades. The menu runs the gamut from basic pastas to chicken, veal, and seafood dishes; the $14.95 dinner special is a particularly good deal. *135 W. 45th St. (869-5565). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

JUdson Grill—Bustling space in midtown office tower with surprisingly inventive American grill food and a bar scene to rival most. *152 W. 52nd St. (582-5252). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

La Côte Basque—Jean-Jacques Rachou's transplanted shrine to French cooking has preserved the Basque murals and the coddled atmosphere of the original location one block east. Modernized, with a menu more "American with a French accent," and with the accomplished Lincoln Carson replacing pastry chef Richard Leach, the old-world institution has been successfully reborn. *60 W. 55th St. (688-6525). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

La Veranda—Northern Italian food. A popular spot in the theater district offering generous portions of fish, seafood, veal chops and pasta. *163 W. 47th St. (391-0905). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Langan's—American cuisine in a clublike setting. Food ranges from Black Angus steaks to crab cakes and seafood. A trendy, well-heeled crowd at the much-frequented bar mixes with theatergoers in the dining room. *150 W. 47th St. (869-5482). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Photograph by Warren Salowe.

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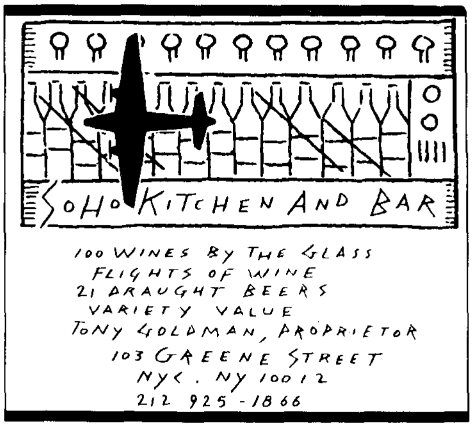

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Le Bernardin—French-born Eric Ripert carries forth the quest of his predecessor, the late Gilbert Le Coze, for the world's most spectacular seafood. His ambitious signature dishes—scallops and foie gras with truffles, Spanish-style mackerel in Jerez vinegar, saddle of monkfish—have already won a very loyal following. *155 W. 51st St. (489-1515). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Le Rivage—Pretheater bistro: reasonable prices, efficient service, and satisfying fare. *340 W. 46th St. (765-7374). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Martini's—Convenient for pre- and posttheater, with a buzzing year-round sidewalk café and chef Richard Krause's rustic homemade pastas, charcoal-grilled seafood, and wood-oven pizza. *810 Seventh Ave., at 53rd St. (767-1717). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Osteria al Doge—Cheerful restaurant in the theater district serving fine Northern Italian cuisine, with a menu that includes frito misto, risotto, and a variety of pizzas and pastas. *142 W. 44th St. (944-3643). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Osteria D'Angelo—This casual Italian establishment offers all the usual favorites, from a dozen varieties of pasta to more elaborate creations like shrimp Catalina. Well-situated for for pre- or posttheater dining. *242 W. 56th St. (307-0700). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Osteria del Circo—The restaurant of the moment, partly because of its excellent bloodlines (Sirio Maccioni's brood of charming sons runs the place) and partly because of its flavorful, home-style Italian menu. Be sure to try anything created by proud mother (and food consultant) Mrs. Maccioni. *120 W. 55th St. (265-3636). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Pierre au Tunnel—Traditional French cuisine, served in thoroughly charming and comfortable surroundings. *250 W. 47th St. (575-1220). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Rainbow Room—"Where troubles melt like lemon drops," boasts this perch in the sky. The restaurant is 65 stories up and more than 60 years old, and its stellar views of New York give it reason to gloat. That, plus chef Waldy Malouf's famous regional cuisine, and spirited updates of the classics. Jacket and tie required. *30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

René Pujol—This Theater District oasis offers fine provincial French cooking in a sweet country-inn atmosphere. The conventionally familiar menu includes standards like rack of lamb for two, Dover sole, and chocolate soufflé with Grand Marnier ice cream. *321 W. 51st St. (246-3023). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Ruth's Chris Steakhouse—A steak cooked in butter is the centerpiece of this successful upscale chain's take-no-prisoners march east across the country. Steak served in a series of connected, muted, and wood-paneled dining rooms. *148 W. 51st St. (245-9600). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Sea Grill—Plush, cozy dining room open to garden tables in the summer and offers a view of the Rockefeller Center skating rink in winter. The serving team does cartwheels toting crab cakes with two sauces, mint-touched carpaccio of yellowfin-tuna mignon, and swordfish steak at premium prices. *Rockefeller Plaza, 19 W. 49th St. (332-7610). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Stage Delicatessen—A landmark deli that serves gigantic sandwiches, every one of which is worth returning for. *834 Seventh Ave., nr. 54th St. (245-7850). (I) AE, MC, V.*

T.G.I. Friday's—When you crave the familiar, this casual American chain provides predictably decent grub like burgers, steaks, pastas and potato skins. *761 Seventh Ave., at 50th St. (767-8350). Also, seven other Manhattan locations. (I) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

'21' Club—The new, old, younger '21' has lost its *hauteur* at the door but not its toys in the artfully restored saloon. Club classics alongside contemporary whimsy at prices that stagger, but from 10:30, supper is a bargain. *21 W. 52nd St. (582-7200). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Victor's Cafe 52—Until the fall, this is as close to Cuba as you can get—at least in this neighborhood. *236 W. 52nd St. (586-7714). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

57th–60th Streets

Contrapunto—Join the queue in this good-looking, updated restaurant that's added a roster of sophisticated meat and seafood dishes to its renowned pastas. *200 E. 60th St. (751-8616). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven—The country's entertainment-industry glitterati make themselves right at home at I. M. Pei's monumental dining room. Susan Weaver is one of the only working chefs to combine contemporary presentation and technique with classic Provençal on one plate. The weekend bar scene puts the concept-hotel bar scene to shame. *57 E. 57th St. (758-5700). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Les Célébrités—Plush and old-fashioned, this imposing dining room in the Essex House on Central Park South also happens to have a very fine kitchen. Dinner only. *160 Central Park So. (484-5113). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

The Manhattan Ocean Club—Savor your seafood in an elegant dining room decorated with Picasso ceramics and Brazilian-red-cherry floors. *57 W. 58th St. (371-7777). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

March—This small townhouse feels homey and romantic. Try confit and grilled duck touched with sweet and savory chutneys or Atlantic salmon with Middle Eastern spices and aïoli. *405 E. 58th St. (754-6272). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Mickey Mantle's—A sleek sports bar and restaurant with an art gallery, the requisite TV monitors, and a collection of vintage baseball jerseys. Features American cuisine like hickory-smoked baby back ribs, chicken-fried steak, and grilled swordfish. *42 Central Park So. (688-7777). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Rosa Mexicano—Did someone say "fresh-pomegranate margarita"? Yes, someone did. What's more, this spot prepares your guacamole tableside (a south-of-the-border hibachi?). Some of the tastier gourmet Mexican in the city. *1063 First Ave., at 58th St. (753-7407). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

San Domenico—Toques off to owner Tony May, who may have done more for the cause of serious Italian cooking in New York than any other single restaurateur. His dining room is formal, and the food is wonderful. *240 Central Park So. (265-5959). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, East Side

Arizona 206—Innovative southwestern, situated amid a cluster of movie theaters, and spitting distance from Bloomingdale's. Adobelike setting with fireplace and active sort-of-singles bar. Ideal spot for a

Restaurant
Swede Tooth

Twig chairs, blown-glass fish sconces, and chopped-wood wall treatments may seem anomalous to midtown Manhattan, but such stylized log-cabin attire melds perfectly with the rustic Scandinavian cooking at Christer's. Having already infused—to great acclaim—his main courses with the "forest flavors" of his homeland like pine essence, rosemary, and juniper, Swedish-born chef Christer Larsson is turning to desserts. To that end, he's imported Therese Baalack from a village in the Swedish countryside. Larsson plucked Baalack, 21, from her grandfather's farm, where she helped her mother feed vacationing urbanites from Stockholm who'd pay to hunt wild boar and deer on the wooded property. Back home, Baalack foraged wild berries and herbs—the same ones she'll now have air-shipped to West 55th Street for her lingonberry spice cake, Belgian-style waffles with tart arctic cloudberries, and tangy rhubarb sorbet. *"I like to create things with my fingers and use seasonal ingredients,"* says Baalack, who's also begun baking fresh loaves of sourdough bread studded with apples, onions, and herbs like rosemary, saffron, and fennel. Ironically, her Scandinavian creations—less single-mindedly sweet than American pastries—are something of a dying art. "Desserts in Sweden's restaurants," *she says,* "are more like American ones." A popular example of this culinary imperialism? When in Stockholm, forget the berries; brownies are a much bigger deal. **Robin Raisfeld**

Photograph by Jason Schmidt.

drink or a feast. *206 E. 60th St. (838-0440). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Cafe Pierre—The next best thing to room service is this warm, intimate dining room. Serving contemporary French cuisine, this is the perfect elegant spot to enjoy good food and discreet conversation. Dinner dancing, starting at nine Thursday through Saturday. *2 E. 61st St., in the Hotel Pierre (940-8195). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Campagnola—Country-style Italian fare for the neighborhood—the whole neighborhood. *1382 First Ave., at 74th St. (861-1102). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

El Pollo—This Peruvian chicken joint has stuck with its simple, minimal menu, to the benefit of this otherwise barren neighborhood. Potatoes come four ways, but you can't miss with the incredible curly fries. *1746 First Ave., nr. 90th St. (996-7810). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Elaine's—Primarily a clubhouse for the city's notables and wannabes. A table here is considered a badge of honor by some. While discussing the issues of the day, try American fare for very busy people. *1703 Second Ave., bet. 88th and 89th Sts. (534-8103). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Hi-Life Restaurant & Lounge—A seamless fusion of a steakhouse and an ocean-liner lounge. The dining room's landscape is speckled with round booths so big and luxurious that they seem structural. This place has two gears: As the evening wears on, the young-moms-with-strollers eatery gives way to an East Side hot spot complete with a sushi bar. *1340 First Ave., at 72nd St. (249-3600). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

L'Absinthe—Chef Bergougnoux cooks exquisite contemporary and traditional French food for a most appreciative Upper East Side clientele. All the brasserie details, from the zinc bar and brass rails to the cheese tray and filleted-at-tableside sole meunière, feel more Right Bank than Manhattan. *227 E. 67th St. (794-4950). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Letizia—Upper East Side neighborhood Italian that treats everyone like a local. The food is drawn from all regions; the red snapper with fresh vegetables is a standout, as are the homemade desserts, and the wine list has won awards. Live piano music nightly. *1352 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (517-2244). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Marti Turkish Restaurant—Kebabs 'R' Us, and the stuffed cabbage is good, too. A dining room that seats 200 people, complete with live music and wandering belly dancers. There is also a "special party room." *1269 First Ave., nr. 68th St. (737-5922). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Nino's—Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. *1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (988-0002). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

One Fish Two Fish—Fish is the theme here. Everything—shrimp parmigiana, steamers, quarter-pound Maine lobster—comes with as much salad and garlic bread as you can eat. *1399 Madison Ave., at 97th St. (369-5677). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Park Avenue Cafe—A polished, countrified American café for business lunches and off-duty get-to-know-yous in the evening. Chef David Burke makes the tired catchall "American fare" sing, and keeps the *haute* neighbors rapt with signature dishes like rack of lamb and his swordfish chop. *100 E. 63rd St. (644-1900). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Post House—Clubby and comfortable, this handsome dining room specializes in good quality and big portions. The peppery Cajun-style steak is a favorite, especially with a side order of French fries or onion rings. There are dishes with decidedly less cholesterol—poached salmon, say, or lemon chicken—but this isn't a place to watch your waistline. Seriously. *28 E. 63rd St., in the Lowell Hotel (935-2888). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Toraya—A Japanese teahouse offering an enticing assortment of confections, green teas, and desserts. *17 E. 71st St. (861-1700). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Trattoria Libertá—This Italian trattoria specializes in homemade pasta, and commemorates everybody's favorite outdoor artwork with a Statue of Liberty crown motif. *1574 Second Ave. nr. 81st St. (772-0752). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, West Side

Cafe des Artistes—A smartly run, wonderfully romantic bistro with frolicking nudes on the walls. Open and serving all the time. Stop in before or after a jaunt to Lincoln Center. *1 W. 67th St. (877-3500). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Gabriela's—Real Mexican food. Don't come here for bulging burritos, but for fragrant chicken soup, steamed tamales that taste like corn, and tender pork marinated in Seville orange juice and spices. Try the *licuados*, fruit shakes, and the *aguas frescas*, fresh-fruit drinks, to cool off. *685 Amsterdam Ave., at 93rd St. (961-0574). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Hi-Life Bar & Grill—Big-city brasserie with retro feel—*and* a completely au courant sushi bar. During the week, the mahogany French doors, an overstuffed banquette, and the oversize goldfish tanks provide a cozy refuge for the neighborhood. Fine food that ranges from steamed dumplings to strawberry sundaes. After dinner every weekend, a D.J. tilts the place toward a party. *477 Amsterdam Ave., at 83rd St. (787-7199). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Iridium Jazz Club—The American food in this subterranean jazz club will satisfy high and low cravings for everything from lobster to fried chicken. *44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

La Caridad—Chino-Latino soul food in a neighborhood notoriously devoid of restaurant personality. Mammoth portions, enormous lines. *2199 Broadway, at 78th St. (874-2780). (I) ($).*

Londel's—Food cooked soulfully on a blooming strip off Strivers Row. Live music most nights and velvet rope at the front door create an ambience not often associated with home cooking. Try the smothered pork chops, but be forewarned: Everything's cooked to order—*slow*-cooked to order. *2620 Frederick Douglass Blvd., at 140th St. (234-6114). (I–M) CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

M&G Diner—Dropping-off-the-bone short-rib sandwiches at the counter and low-key comfort. Jukebox is worth scanning. *383 W. 125th St. (864-7326). (I) ($).*

Merlot Bar and Grill—The overwrought, fantastic architecture of what was formerly Iridium restaurant has been converted into this toned-down homage to the grape Merlot, of which there are 50 varieties. Representative French-American menu items include Brie en croute and salmon with lobster potatoes. *48 W. 63rd St. (363-7568). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

River—The *faux*-tropical atmosphere provides a serene background for the interesting amalgam of Southeast Asian food. Standouts include pad thai, basil chicken, pork chops, and red snapper. *345 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 76th St. (579-1888). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Tavern on the Green—A must for your country cousin. This mazelike collection of dining rooms, each with a view of the park better than the previous one's, is worth cutting the hansom-cab ride short for. *Central Park at 67th St. (873-3200). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

West 63rd Street Steakhouse—Mahogany tables and red suede walls make this nice-ified steakhouse less stultifying than its midtown brethren. Twenty-foot ceilings allow for a spectacular view of Lincoln Center, and there are seafood and pasta for those who enjoy the company of a meat-eater. *44 W. 63rd St. (246-6363). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Brooklyn

Cucina—A labor of love. Northern Italian in an elegant and very well appointed room. Sensational antipasti. *256 Fifth Ave., nr. Garfield Pl. (718-230-0711). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Lundy Bros.—A restored Brooklyn landmark serving a wide-ranging menu of fish, pasta, chicken, and steak but specializing in fresh seafood. Don't miss the raw bar or the reconstructed shore dinner. *1901 Emmons Ave. (718-743-0022). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Peter Luger's—Steak for one, steak for two, steak for four, and creamed spinach. Apply for your own house credit card, or bring cash. *178 Broadway, at Bedford Ave. (718-387-7400). (E) ($).*

COMPETITION

(continued from page 159)

EAU DE JOY—For the Well-Heeled Music Lover.
Liz Chifari, Miami, Fla.

PROZAQUE—For People Who Can't Afford Joy.
N. Kuperberg, N.Y.C.

CONSPIRACY—New from Oliver Stone.
Susan Harriman, San Francisco, Calif.

SESQUIPEDALIAN—A Sybaritically Nectareous Patchouli by John Simon.
Melinda Kevis, Kansas City, Mo.

EAU MY PAPA—For Father's Day.
Wendy Glickstein, N.Y.C.

EAU PIONEERS—The Scent of the Frontier.
Theodore Zavales, Bergenfield, N.J.;
Rosemarie Williamson, Neptune, N.J.

THE COLOGNE RANGER—Who Was That Musked Man?
Kim Brigham, Lincoln, Mass.

GODOT—The Wait Is Over.
Karl Levett, N.Y.C.

HALLMARK—For Those Who Care Enough to Smell the Very Best.
Marilyn Crystal, Scarsdale, N.Y.

PESSIMISTE—For Those Who—never mind, it won't work.
Ghislaine Bauernfreund, N.Y.C.

PALINDROME—You'll Smell Great Coming and Going.
Barry S. Gillman, East Brunswick, N.J.

SWEENEY TODD—The Ultimate After-Shave.
John Falxa, N.Y.C.

CONCESSION—New from Ronald Lauder.
Jeffrey Brookman, Elizabeth, N.J.

EVENING IN PARISH—A Catholic Fragrance.
Nancy Gibson Nash, Dedham, Mass.
H. Jensen, Phoenix, Ariz.

COSA NOSTRIL—Give Her an Odor She Can't Refuse.
Brooke Minges, Battle Creek, Mich.

SLY—Yo de Cologne.
Gary Belkin, Los Angeles, Calif.

PARVENU—Un parfum pour les nouveaux riches.
David Rozenson, Newton, Mass.

EAU DE GOOD TIMES I'VE HAD—The Sweet Smell of Excess.
Peter Taylor, Toronto, Ont.

SCENTENARIAN—For the Mature Woman.
Alice K. Juda, Kingston, R.I.

MORMON—The Latter-Day Scent.
Dot Edwards, Forsythe, Mo.

MANNA—Heaven Scent.
Jeff Tenzer, N.Y.C.

Competition Rules: POSTCARDS IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, PLEASE. ONE ENTRY ONLY should be sent to Competition Number 877, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022-6999. It must be received by March 28. Editor's decisions are final, and all entries become property of *New York.* Results and winners' names will appear in the April 28 issue.

the mix

The Derriere Guard...*Dracula's* Centennial

Happening **Dressed up, somewhat portentously, as "The Aesthetics of Fear," New York University's weekend conference on Bram Stoker's *Dracula* is really just a full-tilt celebration of the vampire on the occasion of his (that is, the book's) centennial. Joyce Carol Oates will deliver the keynote address, Stephen King and Stephen Jay Gould are slated to participate in a discussion of "Science As a Horror Icon," and screenings of horror films (some at NYU's Cantor Film Center, some at MOMA) round out the weekend. See listings.**

John Leonard's TV Notes

Disaster Sunday (3/23; 7 to 11 P.M.; TBS) is a matched pair of *National Geographic* "Explorer" documentaries—the first, *Killer Wave,* about those 600-mph tsunamis that hate California, Hawaii, and Japan so much; the second, *Fire From the Sky,* preparing us for a major hit from a killer asteroid by looking back at previous collisions, just in time for the scheduled appearance this month of Hale-Bopp, said to be ten times bigger than Haley's Comet.

Judy Garland: Beyond the Rainbow (3/23; 8 to 10 P.M.; A&E) distends its once-over-lightly format to two hours to include every imaginable snippet of the self-destructive career of "Baby Gumm" from vaudeville to radio to Oz to the London Palladium to Jack Paar, with as many comebacks as hospitalizations, plus pieties out of the mouths of Mickey Rooney, June Allyson, Robert Stack, Ann Miller, Burton Lane, Shana Alexander, Robert Goulet, etc.

Out of Nowhere (3/23; 9 to 11 P.M.; ABC) requires plucky single-mom Lisa Hartman Black to wreck a car and lose both her memory and her daughter before finding a lawyer, after hypnosis, who will fall in love with her while both of them chase a Bonnie-and-Clyde team (Eva LaRue and Jason Wiles) so full of crazy energy you may actually find yourself rooting for them and against the cops, who didn't believe Lisa in the first place.

20,000 Leagues Under the Sea (3/23; 9 to 11 P.M.; CBS) gives us a bearded Richard Crenna as the marine biologist Professor Aronnax, maundering among gold bars and brandy on a nineteenth-century chambered Nautilus; a wide-eyed Julie Cox as his zoologist daughter Sophie, who seems to have wandered in from *La Strada;* a hunky Paul Gross, the Mountie in *Due South,* as the noble harpoonist Ned Land; and enigmatic Ben Cross as the satanic prince Captain Nemo, who is portrayed here as if Jules Verne were an anti-imperialist pamphleteer for whom Nemo was a sort of Frantz Fanon or Che Guevara, bent on bringing the West to its knees by ramming North Atlantic frigates while they looked for killer whales. Everybody looks nifty in his-and-hers underwater school-crossing traffic-monitor uniforms except the Nautilus-eating prehistoric sea monster, which looks like a gene splice of flying saucer, giant squid, and waffle iron.

Radio Highlights

Elaine Paige—3/22 from 4 to 6 P.M.: The British star talks about her 18-year career in music, including her experience as the original Evita in the show of the same name (she'll also present her take on Madonna's portrayal of Eva Peron). Highlights from her performances will be played throughout the broadcast. WQEW, 1560 AM.

Symphony Hall—3/19: The Israel Philharmonic in a Sixtieth Anniversary Gala. 3/20: Wagner's Symphony in E, Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2. 3/21: Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 2, Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition.* 3/24: M. Haydn's Symphony No. 41 in F, Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1. 3/25: Rossini's *La Cenerentola,* Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 6 in b. Weeknights at 8. WQXR, 96.3 FM.

Texaco–Metropolitan Opera—3/22 at 1:30: *Carmen.* Angela Gheorghiu, Waltraud Meier, Placido Domingo, and Sergei Leiferkus with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and Chorus. James Levine conducts. WQXR, 96.3 FM.

Casper Citron—3/22 at 10 P.M.: Leonard Garment, former adviser to President Nixon, discusses his book *Crazy Rhythm* with Eric A. Seiff, former chairman of the New York State Investigation Commission; Mark Green, public advocate, discusses his office's investigations into the city's services and programs; Graydon Carter, editor-in-chief of *Vanity Fair,* discusses Hollywood and the Academy Awards; Margaret Colin discusses her role in *Psychopathia Sexualis.* WOR, 710 AM.

New York & Company—3/20: Jay Neugeboren, author of *Imagining Robert: Surviving a Mad Brother,* and Rob Fisher, musical director of the "Encores" series, on the new production of *Promises, Promises.* 3/21: Al and Larry Ubell, the self-appointed "Gurus of How-To" on home repair. Weekdays at noon. WNYC, 820 AM/93.9 FM.

The Written Word

Robert Kramer—3/19 at 7: A reading at International Bookstore & Cafe, 552 LaGuardia Place (260-1000); $2 plus $3 min.

Gordon Lish and Gary Lutz—3/23 at 7: Reading from *Epigraph* and *Stories in the Worst Way,* respectively. KGB, 85 E. 4th St. (505-3360); free.

Jonathan Galassi and Katha Pollitt—3/24 at 7: Poetry-reading series. KGB, 85 E. 4th St. (505-3360); free.

Agnes Rossi—3/20 at 8: Reading from *The Quick.* Barnes & Noble, 4 Astor Pl. (420-1322); free.

Donna Ratajczak and Jessica Treat—3/20 at 7:30: Reading their stories in the anthology *Chic-Lit 2.* Barnes & Noble, 675 Sixth Ave. (727-1672); free.

The Marginalization of Poetry: Bob Perelman, Ron Silliman, Ann Lauterbach, Steve Evans, Juliana Spahr—3/22 at 3: A discussion with open forum, moderated by Sean Killian. At Segue Performance Space, 303 E. 8th St.; $7.

***Paris Review* Reading: 1996 Prize Winners Patricia Eakins and Others**—3/24 at 7:30: Hosted by George Plimpton. Barnes & Noble, 33 E. 17th St. (253-0818); free.

Kennedy Fraser—3/23 at 7:30: Reading from her wonderful collection of essays *Ornament and Silence.* Barnes & Noble, 33 E. 17th St. (253-0818); free.

Bobbie Louise Hawkins, Elinor Nauen—3/19 at 8: At Poetry Project/St. Mark's Church, 131 E. 10th St. (674-0910); $7.

Albert Murray, John Edgar Wideman—3/25 at 8: At the New York Academy of Medicine, 2 E. 103rd St. (996-1100); $10.

"Selected Shorts" with Cherry Jones, Frances Sternhagen—2/26 at 7: At Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway (864-5400); $16.

Photograph by Lester Glassner Collection/Neal Peters.

Lectures and Panels

Gloria Steinem and Andrea Johnston—3/20 at 6:30: Discussing *Girls Speak Out: Finding Your True Self.* Barnes & Noble, 33 E. 17th St. (253-0818); free.

"Information, Technology: Setting the Record Straight"—3/27 at 6: With George Curry, editor-in-chief of *Emerge Magazine*, regular on Black Entertainment Television's *Lead Story*, and editor of the forthcoming anthology *The Affirmative Action Debate.* Tishman Auditorium, 40 Washington Sq. South (998-2130); free.

Sports and American Culture—3/18 at 8: A distinguished panel of sportswriters, editors, and commentators discusses the contribution sports have made to social change in America. The 92nd St. Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. Call 996-1100 for further information; $18.

Events

NYU Dracula Centennial Conference—3/21–23 at 6:30: Stephen King, Joyce Carol Oates, and Stephen Jay Gould will be among the writers and artists and scholars bringing fear into focus at this conference on "The Aesthetics of Fear." At NYU's Cantor Film Center theater on 8th St. Call 998-7130 for further information; $125 for the weekend (screenings at MOMA are not scheduled to take place until April, but the $125 fee will cover admission to them).

The 1997 Greater New York Orchid Show—3/20–23 from 10 A.M. to 7 P.M., till 5 P.M. on Sunday; the sixteenth annual show. The World Financial Center Winter Garden, on West St. bet. Vesey and Liberty Sts. (945-0505); free.

Tours

The Vital Heart of Harlem—3/23 at 1: A three-hour tour led by urban historian Joyce Gold. Once farmland and country estates, Harlem is now the capital of African-American culture. Meet at City College, 138th St. and Amsterdam Ave. No reservations are required, but you may call 242-5762 for information; $12.

Exhibitions

The New Baroque: Early Dance Re-creations and Inspirations—Through 5/10. Twentieth-century encounters with Baroque dance and music, prints and illustrations of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century dance, and documentation of contemporary works. At the Dance Collection Reading Room of the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, 40 Lincoln Center Plaza (870-1630).

Before Central Park: The Life and Death of Seneca Village—Through 8/10. From the 1820s through the 1850s, a substantial African-American community known as Seneca Village thrived on what is now the west side of Central Park alongside the Great Lawn. This exhibition tells the story of that forgotten community. At the New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St., at Central Park West (873-0509).

The Gardens of Ellen Biddle Shipman—Through 4/4. The life and garden designs of one of the early twentieth century's most important landscape architects is the subject of this exhibition. At the PaineWebber Art Gallery (713-2885).

Sports

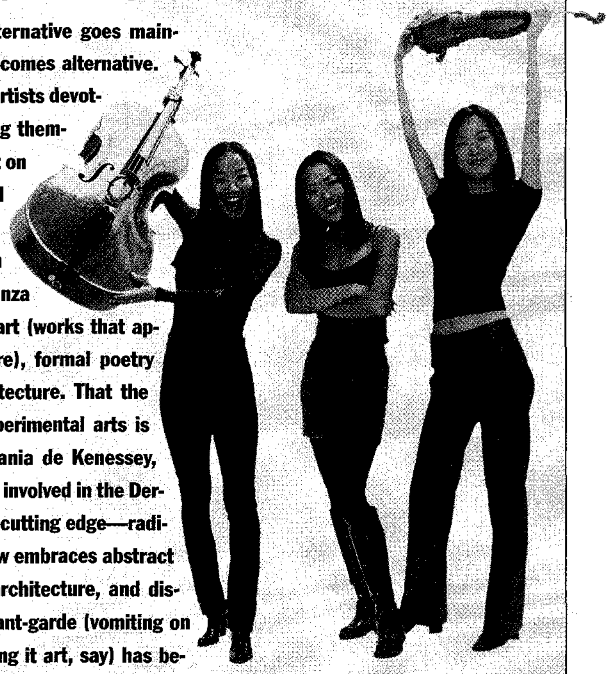
Riverside Park Skate Tour—3/22: 1 P.M.: Zigzag through Olmsted's very own split-level green space (be sure to navigate the gravelly, twiggy asphalt paths with care). The Urban Park Rangers tour ends at the new skating area at 108th St. *Meet at 72nd St. and Riverside Drive; call 800-201-7275 for information.*

Twilight Bike Tour of Central Park—3/23 at 4:30 P.M.: Cyclists are promised "the whole works," mean-

Data

Behind the Times

What happens when alternative goes mainstream? Classicism becomes alternative. Or so says a group of artists devoted to traditional art forms. Calling themselves the Derriere Guard—a twist on the term *avant-garde*—the rebel classicists are planning a festival at the Kitchen (512 West 19th Street). The three-day extravaganza includes chamber music, realist art (works that appreciate technique and the figure), formal poetry readings, and neoclassical architecture. That the Kitchen is known for hosting experimental arts is appropriate, says organizer Stefania de Kenessey, because the artists and musicians involved in the Derriere Guard are, ironically, on the cutting edge—radical because the establishment now embraces abstract art, free-form poetry, fractured architecture, and dissonant music. What was once avant-garde (vomiting on a Mondrian masterwork and calling it art, say) has become cliché or, at best, status quo. CHRISTINA IANZITO



The AHN Trio.

NAME	DESCRIPTION
THE YOUNG OLD FOGEYS 3/20 at 6:30 P.M.	Barbara Krulik, director of the New York Academy of Art, which is dedicated to teaching figurative art, kicks the festival off with a wine-and-cheese welcome.
ABSOLUTELY MARVELOUS 3/20 at 8:30 P.M.	Kristjan Järvi (son of Neeme Järvi, distinguished director of the Detroit Symphony) leads the Absolute Ensemble—an orchestra playing selections with melody and harmony, like in the old-fashioned days, but with a new repertoire and a "humorous, upbeat air," according to de Kenessey. "One of the things that is killing classical music is the pretentiousness that surrounds it."
REBEL ANGELS: A POETRY CABARET 3/21 at 8:30 P.M.	A "multimedia reading" from the new anthology *Rebel Angels: 25 Poets of the New Formalism,* which celebrates structured verse. Readers include Barbara Feldon, the poetry enthusiast better known as Agent 99 in the sixties sitcom *Get Smart.*
FREDERICK TURNER 3/22 at 2:30 P.M.	Prolific author, philosopher, and classical poet Frederick Turner recites his poetry and gives his thoughts on Natural Classicism's rebirth in the arts. Also reading: actor Robert Joy (*Shadows and Fog* and *Atlantic City*).
SELLING OUT 3/22 at 3:30 P.M.	*Crossfire* for artistic types: Panelists debate "Art, Audiences and Money." John Rockwell, former music critic for the New York *Times,* who directed last summer's experimental-music festival at Lincoln Center, presents the pro-avant-garde view. When the cutting edge debuts at Lincoln Center, says the Derriere Guard, you know it's passe.
TOM WOLFE 3/22 at 6:00 P.M.	The patron saint of the realist art community since his notorious 1975 critique of modernism, *The Painted Word,* Wolfe will no doubt wear his spotless white suit to contrast with the Kitchen's black walls.
THE AHN TRIO 3/23 at 3 P.M.	Three Juilliard-trained sisters from South Korea, Lucia (on piano), Angella (violin), and Maria (cello), give classicism a hip, young, and attractive twist.

Photograph by Arthur Elgort.

Solutions to last week's puzzles

S	M	A	L	L	E	R		T	E	S	T	A	T	E
A		F		Y		E		A		T		C		Y
T	U	T	T	I		P	A	S	T	O	R	A	L	E
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A	R	R	O	G	A	N	C	E		E	D	I	T	H
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A	T	E	N	O	R		S	P	E	N	D	S		T	E	R	E	S	A	S
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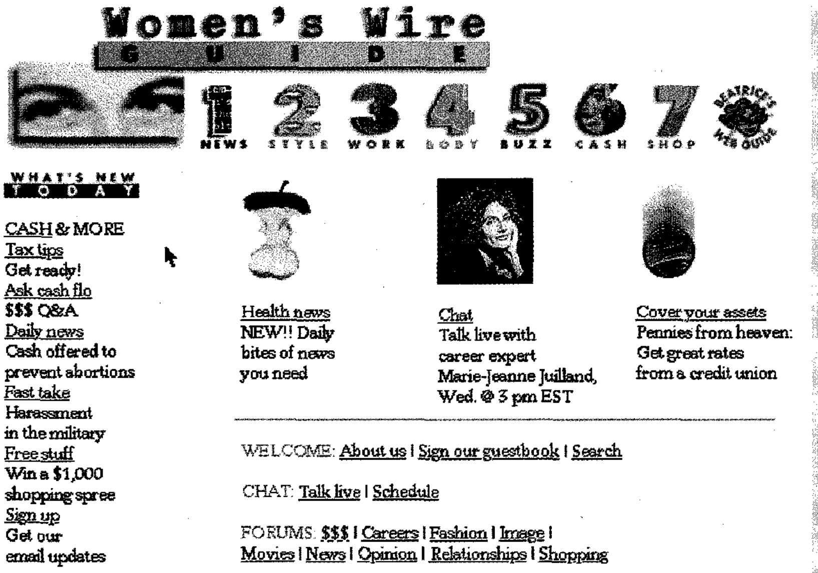

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On the Net
Leading Ladies

For a medium reputed to be bereft of women, the Web is looking positively distaff these days. Leading the charge is Women's Wire (http://www.women.com), which serves up original content and even offers a special search engine, Beatrice's Guide to the Web, to find sites of interest to women. Other, more specialized sites with a largely female audience: the politically inclined Women Leaders Online (http://wlo.org), the networky Women's Connection (http://www.womenconnect.com), and the consumerist Shop! Information Services (http://www.sis.org/).

ing a complete tour of the park from 59th St. all the way up to 110th St. *Sponsored by the Urban Park Rangers; meet at Tavern on the Green, CPW and 67th St. Call 800-201-7275 for information.*

Hockey—3/19: Rangers vs. Montreal Canadiens at 7:30 P.M., Madison Square Garden (MSG Network); 3/21: Rangers vs. Detroit Red Wings at 7:30 P.M., Madison Square Garden (MSG Network); 3/24: Rangers vs. Pittsburgh Penguins at 7:30 P.M., Madison Square Garden (MSG Network); 3/25: Devils vs. Philadelphia Flyers at 7:35 P.M., Continental Airlines Arena (Sportschannel).

Basketball—3/18: Knicks vs. Vancouver Grizzlies at 7:30 P.M., Madison Square Garden (MSG Network); 3/18: Nets vs. Houston Rockets at 7:30 P.M., Continental Airlines Arena (Sportschannel); 3/23: Knicks vs. Portland Trail Blazers at 7:30 P.M., Madison Square Garden (MSG Network); 3/24: Nets vs. L.A. Lakers at 7:30 P.M., Continental Airlines Arena (Sportschannel).

Online

Bopp 'Til You Drop—If you're able to get far enough away from the glare of Manhattan, look skyward on any clear night over the next few weeks and you'll see something genuinely astounding: the Hale-Bopp Comet, which was first detected by human beings little more than a year ago, as it cleared Jupiter on its way toward Earth (if your definition of "toward Earth" includes passing within 122 million miles of us). With its forked tail streaking out behind it, Hale-Bopp looks very much like an iridescent arrowhead pointing across the night sky toward the horizon. Faced with this sight, you will understand instantly why our forebears thought such things to be messages from the gods. It is the largest, brightest comet to pass this way in several centuries and isn't scheduled to return for another 3,000 years. As such, it might be worth a moment of your time. For tips on how to spot it, and background information with which to trump your fellow comet-watchers, consult these sites: NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory for a timeline (*http://newproducts.jpl.nasa.gov/comet/timeline.html*) and finder charts (*http://encke.jpl.nasa.gov/hale–bopp–info.html# find*); the University of Hawaii's astronomy page (*http://www.ifa.hawaii.edu/images/hale-bopp/*); and the European Southern Observatory's page devoted to Hale-Bopp (*http://www.eso.org/comet-hale-bopp/*).

Gender Gap—Coordinate your spring wardrobe by interactively trying on T-shirts, sweaters, and chinos from the Gap. This site allows you to mix and match eleven basics (each of which can be viewed in several colors) that are appearing in Gap store windows nationwide next month. Click an item you want to try on, then drag and drop it onto the male or female figure that is standing in for you onscreen. (You'll need a Shockwave-enabled browser to do this.) You can even select black, white, or Asian from among cartoonish models. But for a putatively hip clothier (based in San Francisco, no less), you'd think that the Gap's Website would be broad-minded enough to let women try on some of the men's items, and vice versa. Bzzzzt. (*http://www.gap.com)*

Pax Requiescat—Another genuinely intelligent site bites the dust. Politics Now (www.politicsnow.com), a joint venture of ABC News, the Washington *Post*, and the *Journal*, ceased publication the first week in March. This site, which featured insightful, balanced commentary from a chorus of distinguished voices, will be sorely missed.

kids

Pulling Strings...Making It Up

Ground Rules:

● = free

● = now or never (one-shot deal or final week)

Children's Events

Salsa Storytelling—Accomplished storyteller David Gonzalez teams up with Mambo and Salsa masters Larry Harlow and the Latin Legends band in *Sofrito!,* a spicy collection of Hispanic myths and music. Hear how one girl befriended a magical goldfish and went on to became the Queen of Paradise, and how Gonzalez's own uncle managed to make trees sing before his very eyes. March 21–30. **NEW VICTORY THEATER**, 209 W. 42nd St. (239-6200). $10.

Small World—Billed as the first ever "World's Fair for Kids,""Just for Kids," a kind of trade-fair-meets-urban-county-fair event sponsored by Crayola, will have something for every child—whether it's the climb-on fire truck, the in-line-skating instruction, or the arts-and-crafts demonstrations. It's geared to kids ages 3 to 12, with ten themed pavilions. If you have been wanting to try out the Empire State Building's SkyRide, or see what's just around the corner in CD-ROMs and computer games, this is the place to do it, see it, try it out. The place is one big infomercial in a sense, with toy companies showing off their products, cooking demonstrations (courtesy of *Good Housekeeping*), a multimedia theater (provided by Microsoft), and food-sample giveaways by assorted corporations. The American Museum of Natural History brings its Moveable Museum, the New York Hall of Science sends a Portable Planetarium, and Alley Pond Environmental Center brings a petting zoo. Kids can try riding a luge (with wheels) and meet members of the U.S. team; there are also opportunities to practice a tennis stroke, walk through a rain forest, and learn about volunteering. March 21 through March 23, 10 to 6. **NEW YORK COLISEUM,** Columbus Circle at 59th St. and Broadway (888-891-5437). Children are admitted free; teens and parents pay $10, which benefits area charities (one-way MetroCards are offered with admission).●

Puppet *Golem*—Six-inch toy marionettes on up to life-size giants perform with dancing mops and underwater creatures in a sixteenth-century-meets-the-present version of the ancient Jewish legend. It's really for grown-ups, but any child who can sit through the 75-minute show will revel in the rich stew of sounds and images. Onstage violence is very limited—the pogrom scene is treated abstractly. Through 3/23. Thursdays through Saturdays at 7:30, Sundays at 3. **LA MAMA E.T.C.,** 74A East 4th St. (annex theater, 475-7710). Tickets are $15, $7.50 for children. ●

Phantom Revisited—**THEATREWORKS/USA**'s completely new version of *Phantom of the Opera,* written and directed by Rob Barron, with music and lyrics by David Spencer, is recommended for children 8 and older. March 22 at 12:30 only and March 23 at 10:30 and 12:30. 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (677-5959); $18.50.

Differently Able—*The World in My Hands,* performed by the **INTERBOROUGH REPERTORY THEATER,** is Helen Keller's life story. Through 4/6. Wings Theater, 154 Christopher St. (627-2961); $7.50.

Making It Up—**FREESTYLE REPERTORY THEATRE,** an extraordinarily talented group, improvises a roster of unscripted shows—not intended for kids per se but highly entertaining nonetheless. Formats include "TheatreSports," where two teams of actors compete in plays based on audience members' suggestions, and "Chameleons," where the audience helps create characters that are melded into one-act plays. Call for a schedule. Through May 4. Grove Street Playhouse, 39 Grove St., west of Sheridan Square (642-8202). Tickets are $15, half for students and seniors, with free performances every other Thursday.

Seuss!—Kids can serve up green eggs and ham, join in art projects, and try out a new CD-ROM in the **CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF MANHATTAN**'s new interactive exhibit, an homage to *Cat in the Hat* creator Theodor Geisel. 212 W. 83rd St. (721-1223). Admission is $5.

Bride of Beowulf—A performance for kids with Viking humor, juggling, and audience participation also includes verse and poetry from the original *Beowulf* text—the oldest epic poem in the English language—and audience involvement.

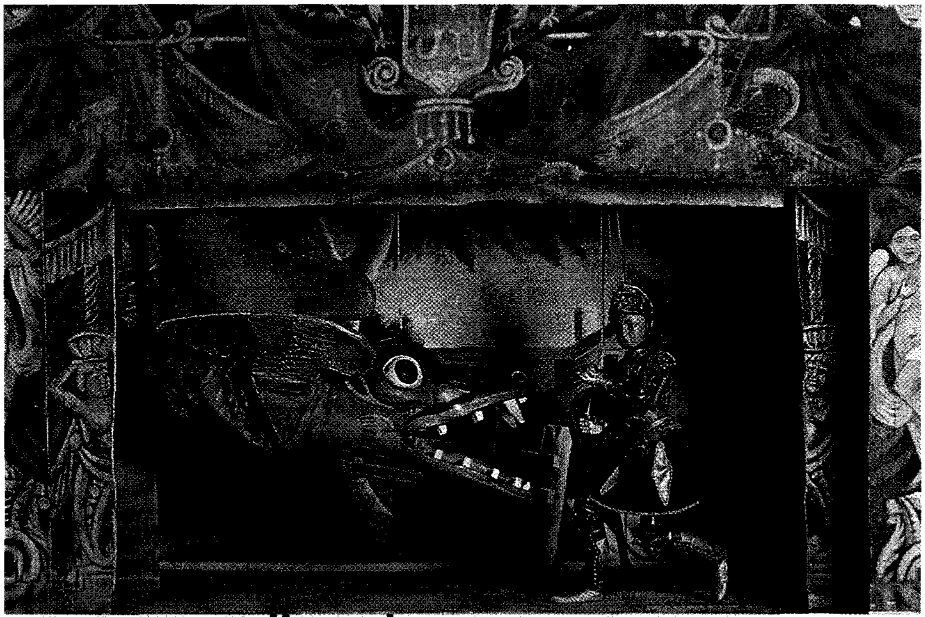
Don Quixote in the City—A musical loosely based on Cervantes's classic Spanish novel. Suitable for children 3 and up. Sundays at 2 through 4/6. **THE PRODUCERS CLUB THEATER,** 358 W. 44th St. (972-0672). Tickets are $8.●

Kids Dance—A group of 11- to 14-year-olds, an offshoot of Elliot Feld's **BALLET TECH,** performs a bunch of short dances. Among them *The Envelope,* a kind of whodunit performed in sunglasses and *Kidsobolus,* an athletic dance for boys that is danced to the music of Kodo drummers. Through April 13. Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave. (242-0800); $20 adults, $12 kids.

Girl Stuff—In their new book *Girls Speak Out: Finding Your True Self,* Gloria Steinem and Andrea Johnston talked with girls across the country about issues they face as they reach adolescence in this culture. The discussion continues March 20 at 6:30 when the authors appear at **BARNES AND NOBLE,** 33 East 17th St. (253-0810)●●

Dreamstuff—A fanciful new Off Broadway musical comedy with a familiar *Aladdin*-ish plot, The story of a teenage runaway who is handed a magical text is set in New York, approximately now. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7, and matinees Sat. at 2 and Sun. at 3. (Through March 30.) **SAMUEL BECKETT THEATER,** 420 W. 42nd St. (307-4100); $37.50.

Circus Tent—The circus that proclaims itself to be the Greatest Show on Earth has arrived at Madison Square Garden. Okay, there is Zusha—the world's *only* performing hippo—along with Bengal tigers, a seven-person pyramid on the high wire, and astounding in-line skaters. But it's the clumsy pre-circus hour, when the audience gets to try balancing on the giant ball and lunging from the bungee trapeze, that you'll be talking about all the way home. March 20 through April 6 at **MADISON SQUARE GARDEN.** Call 307-7171 for tickets. Prices are $10 to $37.50.



Happening
Puppet Regime

Good and evil duke it out in "The Siege of Paris," an episode from a popular "opera dei pupi" drama that had audiences in turn-of-the-century Sicily enthralled over a period of months. Four-foot-high wooden marionettes rescue damsels and take swipes at dragons with the help of the Cuticchio family backstage, who pull all the strings. (English subtitles will need to be whispered into younger children's ears.) Sylvia and Danny Kaye Playhouse, March 19 to 22; $24 adults, $10 children.

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Classical Music

Tuesday, March 18

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—"A Celebration of Titans: Schubert and Brahms," with violinist Ani Kavafian and pianist Anne-Marie McDermott. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 7:30; $22–$30.*

West Meets East—Exploring America's shared musical legacy with Asia, featuring Akiko Nishigata, samisen, and Ralph Samuelson, shakuhachi. Part of the 92nd St. Y's "Today's Composers" series. *Great Hall, Cooper Union, 7th St. at Third Ave. (996-1100), at 8; $20.*

David Helfgott In Concert—The *Shine* subject performs. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $30–$50.*

Joshua Bell, Violinist, and Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Pianist—Perform works by Schubert, Saint-Saëns/Ysaye, and Fauré. *Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $15–$45.*

Wednesday, March 19

New York Philharmonic—Performs works by Schumann, Mozart, and Strauss with pianist Olli Mustonen; Christian Thielemann, conductor. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $20–$75.*

Abbey Simon, Pianist—Celebrates his 75th birthday with a performance of works by Beethoven, Schumann, and Chopin. *Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $15–$40.*

L'Opéra Français de New York—A semi-staged production of Gounod's *La Colombe,* directed by Christopher Alden. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $28–$40.*

Thursday, March 20

Bargemusic—Works by Debussy, Schubert, and Strauss. *Fulton Ferry Landing, under the Brooklyn Bridge, Brooklyn (718-624-4061), at 7:30; $15–$23.*

BAM Salutes Sondheim—Featuring the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra and performances by Donna Murphy, Angela Lansbury, Chita Rivera, and the New York City Gay Men's Chorus. *BAM Opera House, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-636-4100), at 8; $20–$60.*

New York Philharmonic—See 3/19.

Friday, March 21

New York Philharmonic—See 3/19, at 11 A.M.

Isaac Stern, Violinist, and Robert McDonald, Pianist—Their only New York duo recital. *Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (247-7800), at 7:30; $18–$70.*

Mihaela Ursuleasa, Pianist—Performs works by Scarlatti, Schubert, and Schoenberg. *Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $15.*

Ground Rules:

This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and public square/park performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, outdoors or in a public space. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

Saturday, March 22

Wall to Wall Leonard Bernstein—Twelve hours of Bernstein's work, including performances by the EOS Ensemble, the New York Choral Society, and the New York Festival of Song. Talks by Schuyler Chapin, Ned Rorem, and Lukas Foss. *Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. (864-1414), 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.; free.*

National Symphony Orchestra—Performs works by Ives, Bernstein, and Corigliano with violinist Shlomo Mintz; Leonard Slatkin, conductor. *Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $16–$60.*

Les Percussions de Strasbourg—Perform works by Grisey, Taïra, and Hurel on more than 250 percussion instruments. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $25.*

New York Philharmonic—See 3/19.

Sunday, March 23

Richard Goode, Pianist—Performs works by Bach, Brahms, and Beethoven. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 3; $15–$35.*

Bargemusic—See 3/20, at 4.

Music Before 1800—The premiere of Harvey Burgett's *Passion. Corpus Christi Church, 529 W. 121st St. (666-9266), at 4; $18.*

BachWorks—Performs two Bach cantatas and early German motets. *St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, 315 W. 22nd St., at 5; $15.*

Opera

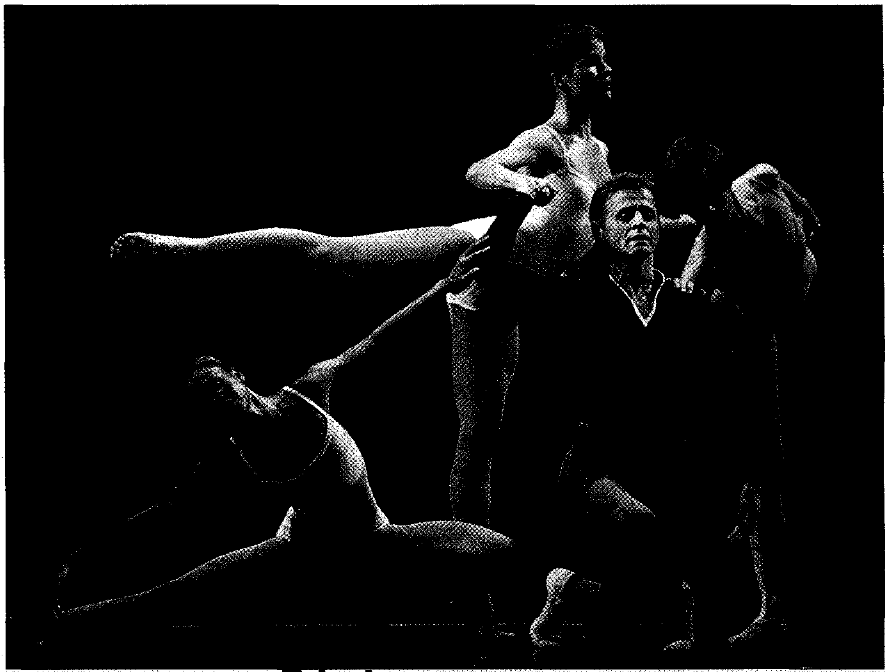
Metropolitan Opera—Verdi's *Aïda,* 3/18 at 8, 3/22 at 8; Bizet's *Carmen,* 3/19 at 7:30, 3/22 at 1:30; Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin,* 3/20 at 8; Gounod's *Faust,* 3/21 at 8, 3/24 at 8. *Metropolitan Opera House, Lincoln Center (362-6000); $23–$250.*

New York City Opera—Verdi's *Rigoletto,* 3/19 at 8; Weill's *Seven Deadly Sins* and Carl Orfs's *Carmina Burana,* 3/20 at 8; Gilbert & Sullivan's *The Mikado,* 3/21 at 8; Offenbach's *Les Contes d'Hoffman,* 3/22 at 1:30; Mozart's *Don Giovanni,* 3/22 at 8; Bizet's *Carmen,* 3/23 at 1:30. *New York State Theater, Lincoln Center (870-5570); $18–$82.*

Dance

Ballet Tech—Elliott Feld's new company. Tues.–Sat. at 8. Through 4/13. *Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. (242-0800); $35.*

White Oak Dance Project—3/25 at 7, 3/26–28 at 8. *BAM Opera House, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-636-4100); $20–$60.*



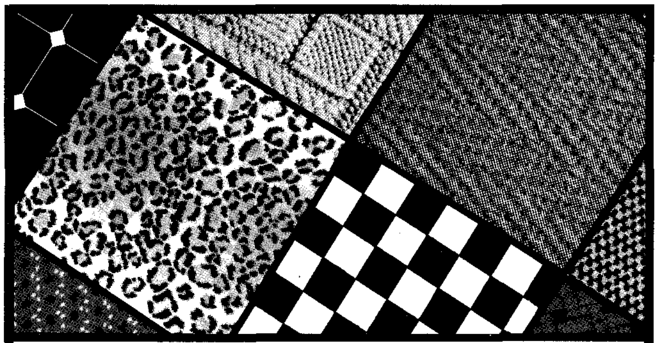
Talent

New Leaves

There's a rare chance to see Mikhail Baryshnikov and Mark Morris's White Oak Dance Project when they come to Brooklyn on March 25. White Oak will perform five nights at BAM, presenting premieres by Meg Stuart and the late Erick Hawkins, a new solo for Baryshnikov by Dana Reitz, and an update of Merce Cunningham's 1953 *Septet.*

Photograph by Steven Caras.

Home Expo



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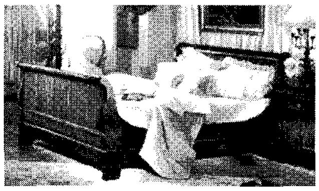

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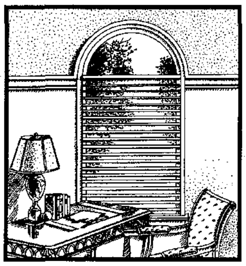

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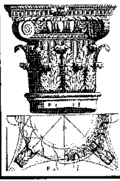

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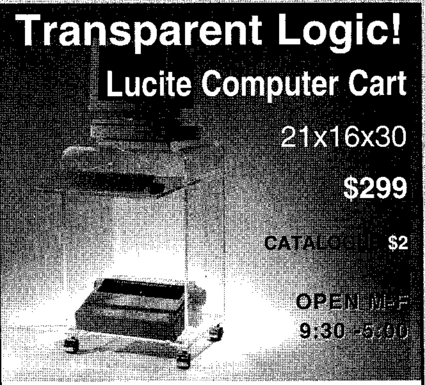

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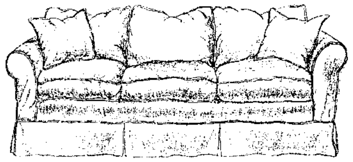

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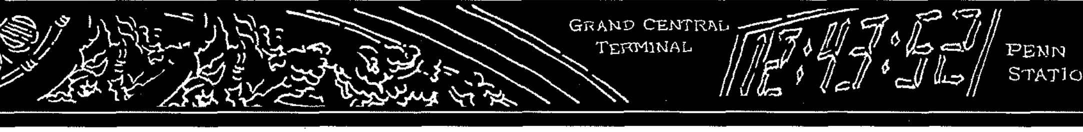

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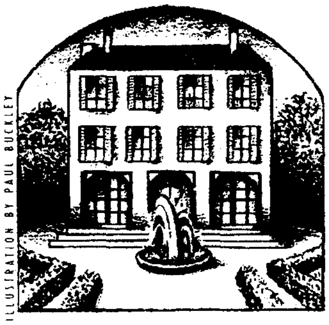

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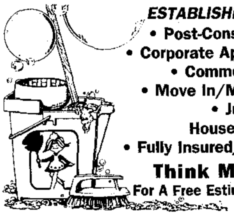

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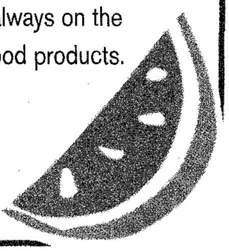

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Successful Executive—30, 6'2", 185 lbs, fit, nonsmoking white male, seeks smart, attractive, slim female, 33 or under, who shares mutual love of travel (especially Europe), art, great dinners and NYC nightlife. Photo/note. 5528 ✉

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Beautiful, Smart, Accomplished JD—Classic blond Wasp with Range Rover, golden retriever, West Side co-op, beach house and other iconic trappings, youthful 30s, 5'9", lithesome, slender, very fit, good athlete, honestly beautiful inside and out. A very successful, secure, happy, Ivy-educated woman with style, a terrific sense of humor and a good heart - seeks her match in one very handsome, very successful white male professional with a first rate mind and a first class life style. Please be a witty and athletic, all-American jock/prep type who doesn't usually answer ads (but definitely won't be disappointed if he answers this one). Prefer (212), nonsmoker. Your literate qualifying letter and recent photo required and appreciated. 3922 ✉

Smart, Sexy And Sometimes Silly—Do you have a fantastic sense of humor? Are you looking for a woman who knows when to take things lightly, when to take things seriously, and when to take things to the dry cleaner? This very pretty, mid 30s, creative, athletic, blue-eyed brunette would like to meet you. Photo appreciated. 5499 ✉

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Vibrant, Beautiful Brunette Attorney—40, with passion for life, loves skiing, tennis, photography, French culture, impressionist art and travel, seeks terrific, nonsmoking, focused, emotionally solid, athletic guy, 35-48, with similar interests and values, for committed relationship. Note/photo please. 5515 ✉

I Seek My One True Love—To cherish forever. Just you and me, childless and carefree. Romeo is 35, 5'11", PhD '97, warm, funny and romantic. Juliet, please respond! 5576 ✉

The Best Friend You'll Ever Have—Warm, caring, affectionate, self-aware and down-to-earth, successful MD (Jewish, though you need not be), who is a good-looking 38 and is also very funny, playful and adventurous - perhaps even a bit mischievous - seeks similar qualities in a secure, creative, thoughtful, attractive and curvaceous woman, 25-35, who is interested in marriage and family (I already have the golden retriever). Photo, please. 5561 ✉

Dynamic, Warm CEO—Cultured, with humor, good looks, slim, 5'10", fun, 43. Seeks sincere woman under 35, for love, family. Phone/photo a must. 5575 ✉ ☎

Witty, Unpretentious—Attractive man, 70, 5'6", seeks unencumbered, secure, articulate, witty, joyous lady, 56-66, for loving partnership. Photo. 5581 ✉

Tall, Handsome Wasp—44, former model, Manhattanite, affluent entrepreneur, would like to meet lady of great taste and style, who wears Armani, Chanel, etc. You live a very upscale lifestyle. Let's see if sparks fly. Please send note/photo/phone. 5506 ✉

Good-Looking, Athletic—Easygoing, "low maintenance", single white Christian male, 42, 6'1", 185 lbs, nice head of hair. Very well-educated, financially secure business owner, drug-free/smoke-free. Enjoys fine restaurants, travel, baseball games, comedy, music. Seeks shapely, stable, single, white Christian female, 28-38, with some mutual interests. LI/Queens preferred. Note/photo, please. 5557 ✉

Handsome Black Trial Attorney—World traveler, 33, with a zest for adventure and enlightenment, seeks a spiritually and emotionally secure female, nonsmoker, over 30. Race unimportant. Together, we will spend an enchanting spring, a seductive summer, and explore the colors and wonders of a magical autumn in NY. Note, photo and phone number appreciated. I will answer all. 5485 ✉

Good-Looking Jewish Gentleman—37, fit, fun, cultured, great sense of humor, seeks sincere, pretty female, 28-38. I feel good communication and sharing are a prerequisite to a long-term relationship. Do you? Let's meet! Photo/note. 5511 ✉ ☎

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NY Model—Equestrian - seeks life partner. I am tall, slim redhead, great legs, great smile. I am also fun, smart, kind and loyal. Looking for tall, dark, handsome man, who is generous and fun. If you adore Italy, play tennis, love jazz, love fine dining and frequent the theater - please respond. Note and photo. 5507 ✉ ☎

Manhattan Entrepreneur—Handsome, affectionate, trim, marriage-minded Jewish man, 5'9", young 51. Enjoys music, dining, gym, scuba, laughs and conversation. Seeks upbeat, intelligent, confident, warm, in-shape Jewish woman (38-49), nonsmoker. Note/photo. 5510 ✉

Strong Yet Gentle Man—48, handsome, trim, 5'11", materially comfortable, spiritually and socially rich, well-educated, athletic, seeks passionate, complex, playful, empathetic, quite striking woman, preferably with small child(ren) or desiring family. Photo helpful. 5547 ✉

Sensitive Romantic—Tall, athletic, late 40s, divorced, very successful, health conscious, works out (gym, jogs) - likes fine dining, good wine, international traveling, theater and being in love. Seeks petite-to-slim, beautiful actress/model/dancer type, 25-35, for serious or fun-loving relationship. Recent photo a must. 5540 ✉ ☎

Captain Janeway Seeks—Captain Picard to boldly go to the Final Frontier. I'll meet you on the Starship Enterprise destined for out-of-this-world relationship. You'll find me an attractive, warm and outgoing, Jewish professional female, late 30s, with varied hobbies and interests, who seeks a star mate. 5531 ✉ ☎

Attractive Greek-American Woman—31, 5'6", fit, down-to-earth, seeks white Christian man, 35-41, fit, mature, confident. 5490 ✉

City Walks, Country Hikes—Professional Jewish man, 47, who enjoys the outdoors and traveling, seeks intelligent woman with sense of humor to share the future. 5580 ✉

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Golfer Seeks Partner—Attractive, Jewish, Westchester accountant, 40, 6', romantic, athletic - enjoys sports, country music and quiet evenings. Seeks serious relationship with an attractive, affectionate, professional, nonreligious Jewish woman (without children or pets), 30-38, nonsmoker, family-oriented. Note/photo a must. 5518 ✉ ☎

Cute, Jewish Funny Girl—36, 5'1", in great shape, successful, outgoing, sensitive. My passions are theater, film, sports, workouts, reading, laughter. You're a handsome, fit Jewish man under 45, with class, intelligence, confidence, wit, *financial security and a kind soul*, ready for love, marriage and family (in that order). 5526 ✉ ☎

Looking For A Real Relationship—Fun-loving, adventurous, pretty, petite Jewish professional, 33, seeks attractive, professional Jewish man, 30-40, who enjoys life but can also be serious. Note/phone. Photo appreciated. 5472 ✉ ☎

Extraordinary—Beautiful, tall, slender Jewish female, nonsmoker, seeks single/divorced Jewish man, nonsmoker, professional, for committed relationship. Dancing, sports, good conversation, over 5'8", 36-45. Note/phone. 5476 ✉

Retired Male, Mid 60s—Seeks companion to share many interests. Bergen County a plus. 5501 ✉

Handsome, Successful Business Owner—Seeks one sharing Jewish lady under 40. Moms welcome. 5530 ✉ ☎

Dark-Haired/Eyed Beauty—Early 40s, Italian, intelligent, refined and compassionate. Seeks tall, attractive, confident professional "gentleman" with healthy and happy spirit. Photo, if you like. 5538 ✉

6', Italian, Dark, Handsome Looks—And style. This athletic Jewish physician/entrepreneur enjoys dancing and playing on the beaches of the Greek Isles to the mountains of Aspen, and I have yet to meet you. You are a truly beautiful, intelligent and spiritual young lady in her 20s, ready to meet and possibly accompany me on the road less traveled. Letter/photo. 5574 ✉

Draw A Picture—*Funny, artistic,* attractive, 42, warm, bright woman seeks bright, caring, kind, fun man. Photo. 5516 ✉

Pretty, Slim, 5'6"—Professional woman, 40, who loves laughter, travel, excitement of the city, serenity of the beach, seeks professional male who is intelligent, romantic, fun and adventurous. Note/photo. 5544 ✉

Very Handsome, Successful Attorney—52, emotionally and financially secure, offers warmth, giving, sensitivity and a youthful life style, including travel, for a counterpart: beautiful, up-to-46 lady, exuding a presence, warmth and abundant brains and wit - comfortable at the opera, at the museum or with a foreign language a plus. *Marriage the goal. Handwritten* note and photo, please. 5579 ✉

NY Jewish/Israeli-Born—42, good-looking, educated, self-employed man, seeking smart, beautiful woman, 27-37, Asian...counterpart for everlasting relationship. 5504 ✉

Extremely Attractive Female—31, Jewish, professional, caring and kind-hearted, loves to dance and enjoys a good laugh. Seeks a warm, handsome, successful, upscale Jewish professional, early 30s, never married, 5'9" plus. Photo. 5495 ✉

You Get—A very pretty, bright, youthful lady. And I get a fun-loving, upbeat, almost-perfect man, 49-59. 5569 ✉ ☎

Widow—57, 5'8", *gorgeous, smart* exec, seeks brilliant, attractive, accomplished NYC guy with social values, humor and pizzazz. 5517 ✉

Easygoing Film Buff—37, JD, funny, attractive, intelligent, laid-back, single white male - seeks similar qualities in single white female, 25-35, 5'7" plus. Photo. 5524 ✉

Bogart Seeking Bacall—Homer seeking Marge. Latkes seeking sauce. Single Jewish male professional, mid 30s, seeking single Jewish female, 27-35, 5'-5'10", for world travel, movies in the park, outdoor adventure and sport, and general mayhem. Prefer running trails to fingernails. Send photo, note and copy of your coolest passport stamp. Must have sense of humor and know when to leave the makeup at home. 5497 ✉

Do You Look Into Eyes Daily?—I want *you. Romantic, shy, feminine,* educated gal loves travel, skis, biking. Seeks male for relationship and marriage. Will relocate for perfect match. Age 40-50. 5588 ✉

'50s Throwback—49-year-old woman who believes in taking care of her man: 55-65, warm, affectionate, loving, supportive, successful professional who has been looking for me all his life! I, who have been looking for you all my life: an attractive, loving, sensual, spontaneous woman. Note/phone/photo please. 5513 ✉

Single Jewish Female—Enjoys tennis, dining out and theater. If you're 39-45, Jewish male, sports-minded, please send *note/photo optional/phone number.* 5532✉

Lovely, Slender Woman Editor—40s, seeking relationship with sensitive, emotionally available man (40s-50s) who likes movies, theater, arts, fine dining, travel, spectator sports, and to laugh - especially at Letterman, Seinfeld, Frasier. Note/photo/phone. 5492 ✉

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Nothing Fancy—Just a gentle, warm guy who likes laughter, easy outdoor activities and culture. Slim, single white male, 5'9", 55, looks younger, seeks female soul mate. 5567 ✉ ☎

Seeking Good Guy—Attractive female, 33, seeks smart, fun, handsome guy to date. Note/photo. 5529 ✉

Still Looking?—Friends and associates describe me as intelligent, sincere, sensitive, self-aware, reliable, honest and "down-to-earth", with a sense of humor. This college-educated, single white Jewish male is 42, 5'9", attractive, muscularly built, with blue eyes and brown hair. I love to have fun but also work hard and own a successful business. I am seeking a single white female who enjoys the outdoors, an active life style, quiet dining and meaningful conversation. Health, fitness and romance are all important to me. If you are 28-38, bright, attractive, in good shape, vivacious, warm and principled, please send note, phone and photo. Will respond with the same. 5493 ✉

I Want It All! - Don't You?—White female, nonsmoker, 36, trim, athletic, 5'7", media exec, seeks mature, tall, financially stable, health-conscious, 38-46, for friendship, passion and golf. 5519 ✉

Kid At Heart—Attractive male attorney, 39, who enjoys tennis, working out, hiking, animals and quiet romantic evenings, seeks playful, affectionate, athletic Jewish female. Note/photo appreciated. 5484 ✉

Lovely—Jewelry designer, 39, with beautiful 6-year-old daughter, who enjoys the full palette of home and travel, good films, a good book and a good laugh, looking for a man of texture. 5541 ✉

Humorous Renaissance Man—Handsome CEO, athletic, (com)passionate, already has dog and guitar; now seeks soul mate (very pretty, fit, sensuous, playful, accomplished, genuine, loving woman, 32-47, perhaps well-analyzed), to share life's journey. Recent full-length photo. 5543✉☎

Self-Annoyingly Cerebral Man—37, will happily relinquish (most of) his egocentricity for an entirely beautiful woman with intuition and life of mind. Please respond with portrait of your choice. 5502 ✉

Israel And The Arts—Jewish woman seeks special man, 60 plus, to share. 5564 ✉

Compelling Attorney—Tall, handsome, menschy and fit, seeks new best friend who is enthusiastic and fun, 28-42. 5566✉

Let's Do It—Attorney, musician, runner, Jewish, 43, 6', seeks commitment-minded, tall female for domestic bliss. Intellect and sense of humor required. Photo. 5568 ✉

Tall, Fit, Very Attractive—45-year-old professional man with easy nature and generous spirit, seeks warm, sweet, pretty woman for lasting relationship. 5549 ✉

Elegant, Petite, Gracious—Southern belle/New Yorker, 50, seeks well-educated professional gentleman, 50 plus, to enjoy NY. Photo/note/phone. 5480 ✉

Boston Chiropractor—Jewish, very handsome, 40, 5'11", 165 lbs, successful, witty, athletic, with great hands and a warm heart. Seeks single Jewish female counterpart, 27-38, willing to escape NY. Note/photo. 5572 ✉

Manhattan-Based, Ivy League-Educated—Attractive widow, mother of two well-adjusted teenage boys, looking to meet a Jewish man, 50-55, very smart, well-educated, stable, of good character and with a good sense of humor. I love good conversation, ballroom and disco dancing, family, fun, people, and am looking to meet a wonderful best friend/lover. I had it all and want it again. 5520 ✉

Curvaceous, Romantic—Black English-woman, 5'4", 120 lbs, 30s, well-traveled, seeks handsome, successful and emotionally stable white gentleman, 30-45, 5'10" plus, for relationship leading to marriage. Note/recent photo/phone, please. 5573 ✉

Very Pretty, Intelligent Woman—Professional, 43, fit and very youthful-looking. Enjoy dancing, cycling, Ping-Pong, aikido, reading and writing. Seek attractive, adventurous man for intimacy and commitment. Photo/phone. 5479 ✉

Elegant, Sassy Blond—Loves flea markets in London, safaris in Africa, seeks professional, educated, secure man with sense of humor, 50-65. 5556 ✉ ☎

Attractive Man, 40—Divorced, with joint custody of 7-year-old son. Lives on north shore of Nassau; works in Manhattan. Businessman, family-oriented, honest and sincere. Enjoys long walks, beach, movies, intimacy and outdoors. Seeks attractive woman with a nice shape and similar interests. Send photo. 5571 ✉

Multiple Choice:—Do you enjoy a) dancing Latin and swing, b) cafes/bookstores, c) the great outdoors, d) ethnic dining, e) any of the above? Attractive, fun gal, 36, 5'7", slim, seeks outgoing, intellectual guy, 32-44, attractive, 5'7" plus, quick sense of humor. Answer in number two pencil; photo appreciated. 5508 ✉ ☎

Westchester—Handsome Irishman, 6', athletic, successful, witty, warm, 51 years. Let's hear from you. 5552 ✉

Beautiful Blond, Sexy And Slim, 29—5'8", professional Catholic female, Manhattanite - seeks sincere, smart, 29-42, tall, handsome, successful, nonsmoking male to share laughs, the arts, travel, sports and more. Note/photo. 5514 ✉

I Saw You—Your scrunchie snagged by boutonniere. Did you want to meet me (6', 175, 40, blond/blue)? 5590 ✉

Where Are You Hiding?—Handsome, tall, fit, divorced dad, Esq., 39, successful, world traveled, seeks divorced/widowed Jewish lady, 28-39, (212), 5'5" plus, with looks, smarts and class. Note/photo/phone appreciated. 5559 ✉

Seasoned, Spirited, Striking—Divorced white female seeks tall male counterpart, 50-58, who hasn't lost his sense of humor, enjoys varied interests and is commitment-minded again. Photo preferred. 5509 ✉

Blond Widow—Manhattanite - loves good conversation, walks, films, books. Seeks retired, educated, caring man for friendship and more. 5475 ✉

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Looking On Long Island—For a friend and a partner. I'm 39, petite, cute in looks and personality. I've got two great kids, I love my work, lead a nice life. I am looking for a cute/handsome emotionally comfortable Jewish dad with a sense of humor, financial security and the need for a best friend. No smokers/note/photo. 5486 ✉

I'm Pushing 40—And looking for love. I enjoy movies, sports and dining out. You should be a Jewish woman, mid 30s-mid 40s, nonsmoker, with similar interests. 5565 ✉ ☎

Shapely, Cocoa Brown—Single female, 34, 5'8", seeks single male, any race, 35-50, 6' plus. We're both professional, financially secure, adventurous, athletic and passionate. You love the outdoors as much as you love the city. We must be lovers and friends for committed relationship. No disease/drugs/drinkers/smokers. 5562✉☎

Check Me Out!—5'6", slim blond, blue eyes, in search of gentleman over 50, intelligent and caring, financially stable, looking to share good times with. Note and photo. 5521 ✉

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To Know Me Is To Love Me—And the love in my heart knows no bounds. Very young (but wise) 45, Jewish, Greenwich, CT, part-time genius, nonconformist company president, laid-back, 5'8", nicely put-together, slight wild streak, incurable romantic, slim, allegedly cute, incredibly fun, missing essence of life: young (looking and acting), slightly off-center, slim, truly beautiful, witty, bright woman of style, who looks great in tight jeans, always thinks "yes", and wants a lover who will always be her angel. Thoughtful letter and recent photo. 5536 ✉ ☎

Wanted: Best Friend—Attractive, 36-year-old Catholic female, 5'8" (125 lbs), seeking tall, fit, (212) Catholic gentleman, 35-40, who is looking to share everything from romantic evenings to household chores. You are handsome, love to travel, successful, like sports, romantic but silly at times, and most of all have a sense of humor. Send note/photo/phone. 5577 ✉

Are You An Unusual Woman?—Jewish, 35, handsome international executive seeks a talented, spiritual woman who similarly possesses depth of character and soul, an intellectual curiosity about the world, a passion for what she does, is communicative, strong yet tender and emotionally available and unpretentious, who is ready to build a loving life partnership and family, and to explore the world together. Photo appreciated. 5555 ✉

Extremely Attractive—Professional woman, sensual, late 40s, divorced mom of teenagers, nonsmoker, successful, accomplished - likes music, theater, walks, intensity in relationships. Seeks similar man with good values, soul, for fun, romance...more? Photo. 5546 ✉

Full Of Life—Caring, white professional female with sweet brown eyes, seeks nonreligious Jewish doctor/dentist, late 40s plus, sincere and easygoing. 5496 ✉

Seeking Slender Asian Woman—With cultural arts interests, for friendship and possible future with reliable, successful white male, 39. Photo/phone. 5481 ✉

Class Act Seeks Leading Man—Corporate attorney, 37, attractive, petite, generous of spirit - loves the arts, travel, sports. Seeks successful Christian professional gentleman, 35-43, who is intelligent, communicative, giving, with traditional values. Photo, please. 5491 ✉

Highly Successful—51, 5'7", intelligent, multifaceted, honest, physically fit and very caring, searching for very pretty lady, any nationality, in her 30s or 40s, with same quality. Note and photo. 5522 ✉

Pretty, Warm, Spirited—Quality Jewish professional, 5'7", fit, happy 49, loves family, friends, learning, travel, working out and music - seeking soul mate to love the most! 5553 ✉ ☎

Successful Surgeon (Specialist)—37, fit, good-looking, regular guy. No baggage. Seeks sincere, never-married lady to 30/size 6, for long-term relationship. Photo/note/phone a must/blue eyes a plus! 5534 ✉ ☎

What Are You Doing—The rest of your life? Sensuous, creative, very attractive blond, slender yet curvaceous, mid 40s, president of Madison Avenue company, would like to meet a friend, companion, lover to be with always. My interests are varied and range from cerebral to culinary, aesthetic to athletic. I prefer dialogue to cyber chat, Main Street to malls, content over form. I write poetry (published), paint, am naturally curious, love to explore museums, galleries, enjoy city nightlife as well as country wildlife. My counterpart should be involved as well as evolved, approach life with humor, passion and insight, 48-60, not afraid of romance or commitment. 5523 ✉ ☎

Warm, Attractive Black Lady—Educated, well-traveled, seeks intelligent, successful white male, 42-48. 5533 ✉ ☎

Hamentasch With Me—Tall, funny, single Jewish female, 35, great cook, seeks modern Orthodox/Conservadox, happy, single Jewish male, 6'3" plus, nonsmoker, with sense of humor, hearty appetite and ummph!!! 5487 ✉ ☎

Special Lady—Ultra-feminine, 5'3", 123 lbs, auburn hair (long) and brown eyes. I'm warm and charming, pleasant, generous and sweet yet intelligent, with good values, sophisticated, down-to-earth and witty - former business owner, Jewish (you needn't be). I'm seeking a foreign-born (European/Mideastern, etc.) or American entrepreneur/CEO, who is intelligent, humorous, fine, conservative, affectionate and honest, for a possible relationship (under 5'11"/40-62). Enjoy restaurants/movies/art/music/sports/nutrition. Note/phone/photo appreciated. 5498 ✉

Tanglewood/Theater Bound?—Berkshire, MA, 51, never-married Jewish woman seeks stable male. Photo. 5554 ✉

Man For All Seasons—Successful, fit NYC attorney who loves art, music, cycling, working out, the beach, baseball, fine cuisine and stimulating conversation, seeks attractive, athletic, accomplished woman, 26-35, for whatever develops. Recent photo and personal note a must. 5535 ✉

Mom Told You To Look For Me—I'm a divorced Jewish male, 36, (201), sales exec, 5'8", 190, nonsmoker, devoted dad - like to cook, NYC, theater, sushi, dance. Be a nonsmoking, professional, single or divorced Jewish female, a real woman, to laugh and to hold...be my best friend; like kids. Note/recent photo/phone. 5505 ✉

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Friday, April 4th
ROXY 515 West 18th St.
Discount Coupons for New York Magazine
Summer Shares Section
Hotline Info: 606-3755

30-Something Professonals (28-49)
FRIDAY AFTER-WORK BASH!
MAXIM'S
61 Street at Madison Ave.
Friday, 3/21, 6-11pm, $20 Admission, DJ, Dancing, 600+ expected. **212-726-2424**

"PURIM In BRAZIL" BPNY SINGLES, 35-55. Open Vodka Bar by ABSOLUT. Live 9-pc Brazil Samba Band. Lt Supper Buffet. UJA-Federation, 130 E 59th St. **Thurs Mar 27**, 6:30-10:30pm. $72 adv. or $85 @ door. **212-836-1189**

Infinity *Sponsors of the "Mitzvah Ball" invites you to join Jewish Singles 21-35*
for a WINTER ESCAPE at
WEBSTER HALL
25 East 11th St. *(bet 3rd & 4th)*
Sat., March 22 • $20 w/invite • $25 w/o
Private Party 8pm in The Marlin Ballroom
Call for invitations: (914) 725-4968

Discerning Jewish Professionals—Fine Art of Matchmaking. Raizy **212-877-5167**

Do You Want2Dance?—Single Dance Partners' Network. Nat'nwide. **800-510-9098**
www.jenntech.com/want2dance

Meet Local Asian Ladies—Amer. men. Friend/marriage. Party 4/26. **212-949-7581**

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Graduates and faculty of the Ivies, Seven Sisters, MIT, Duke, Stanford, University of Chicago, Northwestern, meet alumni and academics. **The Right Stuff: 800-988-5288**

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1 Hour Open Bar, DJ, Food, $25
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BEST SINGLES PARTY
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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26th at 7:00
Dancing - Hors d'Oeuvres - Cash Bar
Admission $55 at the door
Associates Division - Jewish Guild for the Blind
Call 212/769-6240 for more info.

MARY ANN MADDEN #877

NEW YORK MAGAZINE COMPETITION

INDIA CREMATES
134 FIRE VICTIMS
—The Washington Post, February 24, 1997.

. . . Drowning victims to be buried at sea.

Above, the genuine article. Competitors are invited to send an actual clipping (or photocopy) to which a deafeningly witty comment has been appended.

Results of Competition 874, in which you were asked to name and describe a new scent.

Report: Eau de humor of it all. An abundance of said *eau* and other pun-based fragrances. Often, the concept cologne proved more provocative. Fewer verbatim duplications than one might have anticipated. Among them: METRO or AMERICAN STANDARD—Eau de Toilet. WHITE WATER or EAU BLANC DE LA MAISON BLANCHE—Just a Soupçon of Scandal. In all, lively reading, a nice nose with just a subtle hint of freesia. We're keeping them in our refrigerator for a touch-up spritz in warmer weather. See that you do.

First prizes of two-year subscriptions to *New York* to:

OBSESSION-COMPULSION—From Kevin Kline.
Wendy Gottlieb, New Haven, Conn.

THERAPY—For Those Who Can't Get Over Obsession.
Jill Proskin, Cross River, N.Y.

BOY GIORGIO—Do You Really Want to Dress Me?
Peter Roth, Great Neck, N.Y.

BARBRA—An Assertive Fragrance, *Not* an Aggressive One.
Joanne Dolan, Somerville, Mass.

Runner-up prizes of one-year subscriptions to *New York* to:

RETRIBUTION—She Has It Coming to Her.
Patrick Beary, Highland Beach, Fla.

KATHIE LEE'S CODY—For the Pre-shaver.
Elisa Falciglia, Reston, Va.

GEE, YOUR LAIR SMELLS TERRIFIC—For Him.
Susan Moloney, West Milford, N.J.

INGMAR—Smells of a Summer Night.
Steven Colby, Metuchen, N.J.

And Honorable Mention to:

FRIENDS: THE FRAGRANCE—Irritating, Yet Surprisingly Popular.
Ellen Schreiber, New York, N.Y.

AU EAU SEVEN—For Movers and Shakers.
John Blumenthal, Rye, N.Y.;
similarly: Felice Itzkoff, Forest Hills, N.Y.

EAU GOD—A Heavenly Fragrance.
Christopher Anuzis, Huntington, N.Y.

TRAVOLTA—Pheromonomenon.
Wold Bradacs, Hillsdale, N.J.

MICHAEL—New From Pillsbury.
Jan Leary, Winnetka, Ill.

JE SUIS—The Thinking Man's Logical Choice.
B.C. Kenny, Catonsville, Md.

RACH III—Drives Pianists Crazy.
Louis B. Raffel, Northbrook, Ill.

L'IMBAUGH—Pour les hommes à droit.
Paul H. Finley, West Chester, Pa.

DOLLY—Eau de Clone Pour le Mouton.
Bill Harriman, Niantic, Ct.
sp. ment.: Bert Metter, Greenwich, Ct.;
Norm Goldblatt, Los Altos, Calif.;
Joel Jacobs, Wantagh, N.Y.;
Joseph Lannon, San Jose, Calif.;
Betty Heinze, Oak Ridge, Tenn.

NO—For when you really mean it.
M. Lafuente, West New York, N.J.

EXACTLY—The Scent for the Indecisive.
Kevin Tachman, Staten Island

ESTÉE LOUDER—For the Hearing Impaired.
Coco K. Jacobs, Wantagh, N.Y.

SECOND TERM—The Sweet Smell of Success.
Patsy V. Felmet, Wintersville, Ohio

NONSCENTS—Unperfumed for the Self-Effacing.
Michelle Fowler, Waldorf, Md.;
sp. ment.: Jane Clugston, Bethlehem, Pa.

MARY TODD—Gives You That Lincoln's-Bedroom Feeling.
J. Bickart, N.Y.C.
sp. ment.: Dan Stack, Englewood, N.J.

L'AIR DU TEMPS—A Long-Term Fragrance for the Short-Term Worker.
Sandra Hull, Arlington, Va.
similarly: Mark S. Greenberg, Bronx;
Steven Trock, N.Y.C.

EAU CALCUTTA—Barely There.
Bill Planck, East Grand Rapids, Mich.

G.B.S.—The After-Shavian Lotion.
Karen Bracey, Burke, Va.

BEAU ZEAU—For the Clown in Your Life.
Jeff Brawer, Brookline, Mass.
similarly: G. Guadalupe, N.Y.C.

EAU CONTRAIRE—For the Alternative Lifestyle.
Dorian Rehfield, Arlington Heights, Ill.;
similarly: B. Bernstein, Far Rockaway, N.Y.

BOLEYN—Ahead of Its Time.
Anita Planck, East Grand Rapids, Mich.

SYBIL—For All the Women That You Are.
Lisa A. Morris, Lake Ronkonkoma, N.Y.
similarly: M. A. Harper, New Orleans, La..

EXHALE—For the Woman Who Waits.
Stuart J. Erwin, Nescopeck, Pa.

EAUCUMENICAL—For the Undiscriminating.
Alan Katz, Monsey, N.Y.

EAU DE LAY-HE-HOO—For the Trend Goatherd.
Dave Rapp, New City, N.Y.

EAU DE GLORY—A Revolutionary Fragrance.
Karen Lesser, Lenexa, Ks.

L'AIR DU TOM—À la recherche du Perdue.
Richard Monley, Birmingham, Mich.
sp. ment.: Barbara Babich, Orangeburg, N.Y.

L'AIR DU TRUMP—Smell Just a Little Better Than Everyone Else.
Randy Greenstein, Coral Gables, Fla.

PAINE—A Common Scent.
Aussa Hofmann, N.Y.C.
sp. ment.: Richard Fried, Brooklyn

UH-EAU—For the Relentlessly Apologetic.
Carl Edge, Clarksburg, W. Va.
sp. ment.: S. Lee, Dayton, Ohio

EAU DE DOO-DAH DAY—For the Camptown Lady.
Peter O'Reilly, Hillsdale, N.J.

PESTILENCE—Men Call It Devastating.
Unsigned, Bayerville, Ala.

EAU SUSANNAH—For the Banjo Player in You.
Marianne Maloney, Waterbury, Conn.

SUSAN LUCCI'S EAU DE CHAGRIN—For the Insecure Nominee.
William L. Bennett, Muskegon, Mich.

MONSIEUR ED—Scent for the Horse, Of Course.
Gene Duffy, Lakeland, Fla.

OUVERT—For the Out and About.
Carleton Carpenter, Warwick, N.Y.

LINGERING RESENTMENTS—Relive the past.
John V. Hilton, N.Y.C.

JERRY—Eau de Colonna.
Candy Zakrzewski, Kearny, N.J.

TREBEK TREBEK—Double Jeopardy.
Eli Gabel, Staten Island

CYGNE—S'wanderful.
John McCain, Mt. Kisco, N.Y.

PAT—Perfume or Cologne? You decide.
David English, West Somerville, Mass.

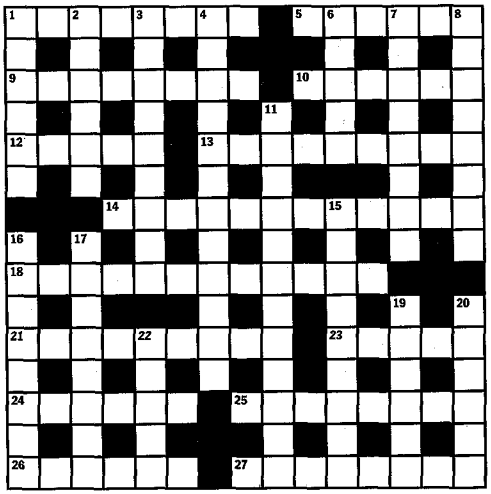
SCENTILLA—A Little Goes a Long Way.
Jill Rafaloff, Forest Hills, N.Y.

(continued on page 137)

The 'Guardian' Crossword

ACROSS

1 Kurdistan certainly has a lot of space. (8)
5 That goose look? (6)
9, 10 One certainly is a bit lacking in the fashion for adventure. (8,6)
12 Died in prison—try to get money. (5)
13 Vessel in reactor to come down in Mausoleum country. (9)
14 Old soldier's taken prisoner, back part in front. (12)
18 Picture of one left by purge. (12)
21 Vendee's satisfied comment about hunt. (9)
23 Tree insect's companion. (5)
24 Sense utter fool's inside. (6)
25 Is there a faint possibility gown is on crooked? (8)
26 Decide to colonise. (6)
27 Diarist to go from Douglas to Peel? (8)



DOWN

1 Remove from the aide-de-camp. (6)
2,3 Walking out since the lady is, hold it there! (6,2,3,4)
4 Single pet at old city is in a fix over the top drawer. (12)
6 Latin skill applied to crime. (5)
7 Harangue to help rising clan. (8)
8 Blushing, as opposed to pale-skinned in North America. (3-5)
11 Incendiary device—put a lot of jewels right into river. (5-7)
15 Agitated for lower and upper garments to be shortened. (9)
16 What God does comes to an end without concessions being raised. (8)
17 Pipe through which blood goes round inside. (8)
19 Edward I's hesitating, having no interest. (6)
20 Japanese ruler has weapon with bone sawn off. (6)
22 Keen on the Spanish pub. (5)

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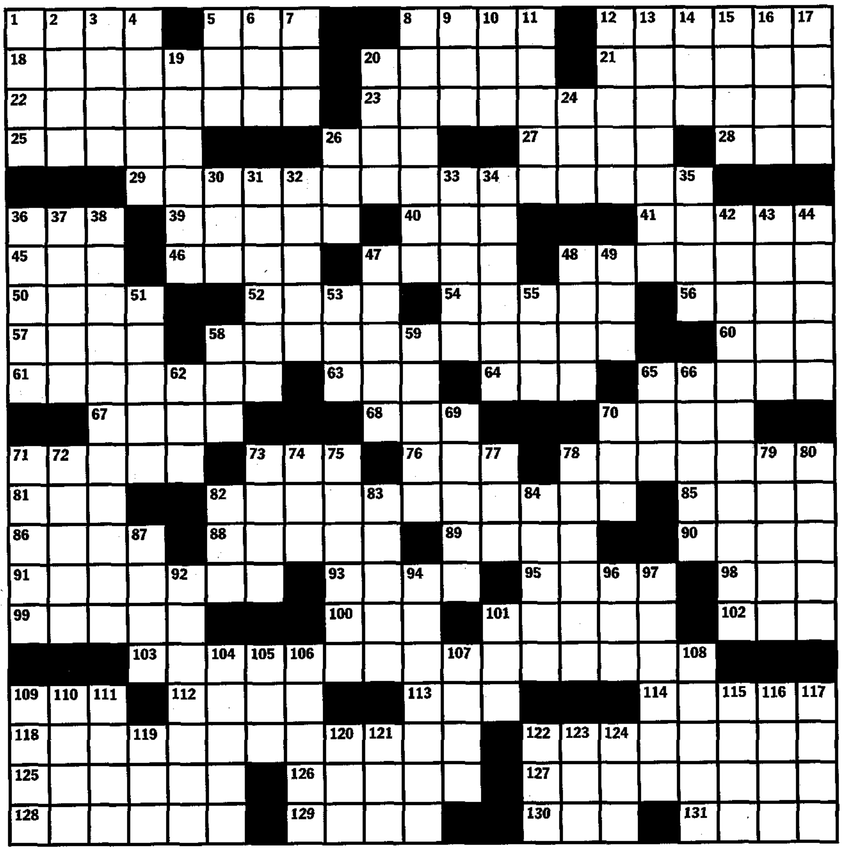
'Honorary Oscar Recipients': 'Cue' Crossword • By Maura B. Jacobson

ACROSS

1 Superlative suffixes
5 Doubledecker
8 Zenith
12 Swapped
18 Least vivacious
20 Sheepish sound
21 Fix over electrically
22 Oscar co-honoree, '91
23 Oscar honoree, '87
25 Praise to the skies
26 Energy
27 Roof feature
28 Two of these follow tra
29 Oscar honoree, '93
36 Tibetan ox
39 "We're off —— the wizard . . ."
40 A filmdom Joanne
41 Puccini opera
45 Actor Wallach
46 Biblical verb
47 Shout derisively
48 Do art-repair work
50 Wrongful act, in law
52 Partner of hearty
54 Creator of Popeye
56 Mimic
57 "—— Dinka Doo"
58 Oscar honoree, '94
60 —— polloi
61 Successful tempter
63 Toothpaste type
64 Took in calories
65 French river of song
67 October birthstone
68 Kind of code
70 F.D.R.'s dog
71 Salad-dressing bottle
73 Oscar winner Fosse
76 Not talking
78 Sang like the Swiss
81 Affectionate embrace
82 Oscar co-honoree, '50
85 Inlet
86 Physical woes
88 Terra firma
89 Feat at the Ice Capades
90 Jaunt
91 Sloping sheds
93 Bar bills
95 Goya's duchess
98 Where SHAEF was
99 Magazine printing
100 Bambi's aunt
101 Howling with laughter
102 "Unforgettable" Cole
103 Oscar honoree, '82
109 Jungfrau, e.g.
112 Actual
113 Failed lib amendment
114 Oscar winners Paquin and Magnani
118 Oscar co-honoree, '50
122 Oscar honoree, '84
125 Insert more bullets
126 Mrs. Schwarzenegger
127 "You're an Old ——," 1932 tune
128 Evaluate
129 What X marks
130 Gratuity
131 One of the Thompsons

DOWN

1 Girl in a Salinger tale
2 River of Hades
3 Small pie
4 "The —— Madelon Claudet" (Helen Hayes Oscar film)
5 —— canto
6 Servicemen's club: abbr.
7 Porky's place
8 With ice cream
9 Cartoon animation unit
10 Traveler's diagram
11 Oscar winner Barrymore
12 Famed Roman fountain
13 Goes easier on
14 Leather punch
15 Watch face
16 Memorable Bombeck
17 Governors of old Tunis
19 Fourth Hebrew letter
20 ——-a-brac
24 Chateau gala
26 Compete
30 Report to the coroner: abbr.
31 Rolle of "Good Times"
32 G.I.s' therapy
33 Straight from the farm
34 Archimedes' cry
35 Greek vowel
36 Himalayan mirages
37 Unescorted
38 Oscar honoree, '96
42 Oscar co-honoree, '91
43 Mythical king of Thebes
44 Eagle's nest
47 Spain's sherry city
48 Not often found
49 Make a gaffe
51 Brownish gray
53 Skipper's diary
55 Acquire
58 Tierra —— Fuego
59 Shirley MacLaine's "Out on ——"
62 Witch's pet
65 Disheartened
66 Send to Washington
69 Mountain lions
70 In favor of
71 Tex-Mex dish
72 Holds sway
73 Pythons' relatives
74 "—— Town"
75 Sharp to the taste
77 Artist Ernst
78 Coward's color
79 Madonna role
80 Redcap's milieu
82 Oscar-winning director McCarey
83 Writer Alexander
84 Hanker
87 Cold-shoulder
92 Mob-dispelling substance
94 Sandlot single
96 Smaller than a gulf
97 Whirlaway's rider
101 Motorists' org.
104 Oboe, bassoon, etc.
105 Wham's go-with
106 Old grads
107 "—— Little Tenderness"
108 Macramé details
109 Tour city of India
110 Oscar winners Grant and Marvin
111 Ward heelers
115 Okinawa's capital
116 LSD
117 Mets' home
119 Future fish
120 Ice-T's music
121 Money player
122 D.D.E.'s predecessor
123 Brest friend
124 Cut off



Solutions to last week's puzzles appear on page 140.

How do you find the perfect Easter Egg?
1. Look for the festive gift foil.
2. Unwrap carefully.
3. Discover the delicious chocolate that can only be Perugina.
4. Crack it open...you never know what you'll find inside.
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